■ LIFESTYLE / C1
Happy new you is 'anorexic, tall and effing gorgeous'

■ NEWS / A3
Cops told: Drink on New Year's Eve but don't get drunk

■ BUSINESS / B3
Cocktales says bishop objects to Thunderbird casino; opening deferred

■ NEWS / A2
SWS survey: 85% of Filipinos approach 2006 with hope

How to take care of dogs when firecrackers explode

By Tessa R. Salazar

SETTING OFF FIRECRACKERS on New Year's Eve is supposed to drive away evil spirits. But the explosions can drive man's best friend mad, or worse, ter-

HOW TO/ A5

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Friday, December 30, 2005 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 22 P18
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320 troops join UN peace mission to Liberia, Haiti

A TOTAL OF 320 FILIPINO SOLDIERS ARE leaving today for strife-torn Liberia and Haiti to join the United Nations peacekeeping forces there, the military announced yesterday.

The first batch of the 165-member contingent to Liberia and the 155-member contingent to Haiti will replace Filipino peacekeepers earlier deployed to the beleaguered coun-

320 TROOPS/ A5

GIs detailed, not detained

4 US Marines charged with rape on 'temporary duty' at Jusmag

By Volt Contreras

THE FOUR AMERICAN Marines charged with raping a Filipino woman are now on "temporary duty" at the Joint US Military Assistance Group (Jusmag), an office within the US Embassy compound in Manila, an official of the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

It was the most specific information so far made public on the whereabouts of the suspects since the embassy placed them under its custody shortly after the alleged Nov. 1 rape incident.

The INQUIRER learned of the soldiers' "status" from Ed Malaya, executive director of the legal division of the DFA.

"When the DFA inquired about the servicemen, the US Embassy said that they were on temporary duty status with Jusmag," Malaya said in an interview.

The DFA on Nov. 16 asked the embassy to turn over the Marines to Philippine authorities. The embassy has yet to respond, maintaining that the matter is still before the US Department of State in Washington.

Six US servicemen originally underwent preliminary investigation before the Olongapo City prosecutor's office on allegations that they raped a 22-year-old Filipino woman inside a van at the

GIs DETAILED/ A4

EMMANUEL ENCARNACION COLLECTION

RARE PHOTO taken at the Paco Cemetery where Rizal's grave was discovered in August 1898. Rizal's bones were brought to his sister Narcisa's house in Binondo.

Rizal martyrdom: The making of a national hero

(THE AUTHOR is an art and antiques patron, particularly of those related to the Propaganda Movement and the Philippine Revolution of 1872-1901 and of Philippine carnivals. Facsimiles of his collections are displayed at the National Historical Institute's Museum of Philippine Political History in Manila.—Ed.)

By Emmanuel Encarnacion
Contributor

COMMENTARY

MORE THAN A CENTURY after Jose Rizal's death, one wonders if Filipinos couldn't have done a little more to fully honor the memory of the man they regard as their foremost national hero.

For one, a vertebra of the hero remains on display in a Manila shrine, at times eliciting jokes from visitors. For another, the monument built at Rizal Park to honor him was actually only the second choice of a selection jury.

Hardly fitting for a man who helped shape events that have had a deep impact on the nation's life.

Rizal's journey to martyrdom began in 1892 when he was arrested and brought to Fort Santiago without the benefit of any trial.

RIZAL/ A6

Embassy: 2 GIs cleared now in Okinawa

By Volt Contreras

TWO US MARINES PREVIOUSLY linked to the alleged rape of a Filipino woman at the Subic Bay Freeport have left the country and returned to their home base in Okinawa, Japan, the US Embassy confirmed yesterday.

"Yes, they have been released," a US Embassy spokesperson said, referring to Lance Corporals Corey Burris and Albert Lara. "Since all complaints against them have been dismissed they have returned to their unit in Okinawa."

She declined to give details on how the two left the country.

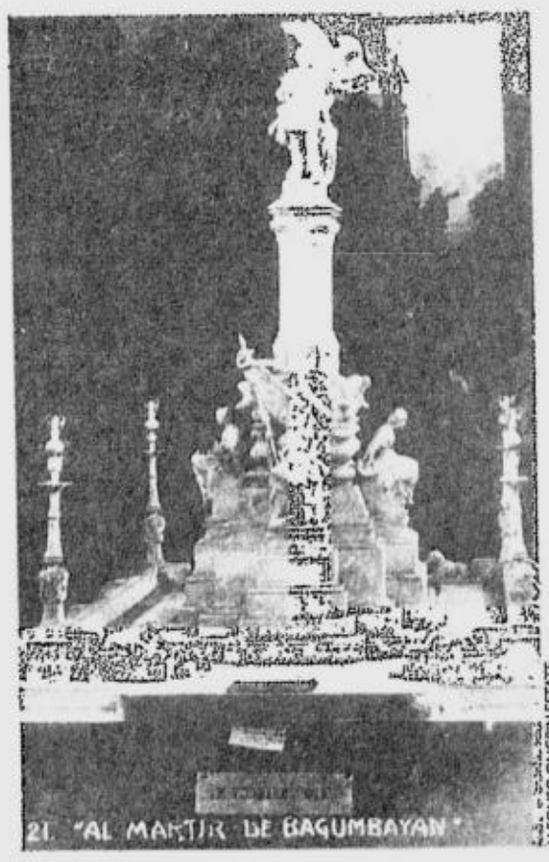
Burris and Lara's departure virtually dashed whatever hopes the victim's lawyers may have had to include them in the charge sheet.

Prosecutors on Tuesday filed rape charges against four other Marines and Timoteo Soriano, the Filipino driver of the rented van where the supposed rape occurred on Nov. 1.

The complaints against Burris and Lara were dismissed for lack of evidence.

Lawyers for the alleged victim had said they might file a motion for reconsideration to have Burris

EMBASSY/ A4



ALFONSO ONGPIN ESTATE

SCALE MODEL titled "To the Martyr of Bagumbayan" submitted by Italian Carlos Nicoli in January 1907 bested 40 other entries.

Monument that never was won tilt

By Jerome Aning

THERE HE STANDS ON TOP OF the pedestal, his left hand holding a pen. He is not alone. Hovering over him is a winged and robed female figure, possibly a symbol of Victory, Martyrdom, Liberty, or the Motherland.

On the lower tiers of the marble-white monument are statues of young women, perhaps symbols of his noble virtues and of the various fields of knowledge he had excelled in.

That is how the monument to national hero Dr. Jose Rizal looked—the monument that never was.

According to Augusto de Viana, chief of the National Historical Institute's research and publications division, that monu-

MONUMENT/ A6

SHIPPED in pieces from Europe and assembled here, the bronze and granite monument at Rizal Park was sculpted by Swiss Dr. Richard Kissling.

Centenarian recalls Man from Calamba

By Gerry Lirio

A 100-YEAR-OLD woman might be standing quietly somewhere near as top government officials hold a flag ceremony at the Luneta in honor of Dr. Jose Rizal today, the 109th death anniversary of the country's national hero.

CARMEN PONCE VILLAROMAN: In her Sunday best.

She is Carmen Ponce-Villaroman, daughter of Rizal's fellow revolutionary Mariano Ponce, a native of Baliuag, Bulacan. Every day for the last 10 years, she has been traveling with her relatives from her home in Quezon City to Rizal Park.

CENTENARIAN/ A6

2 Fil-Am soldiers killed in Iraq; one to be buried in Bohol

By Volt Contreras
in Manila
Jhunnex Napallacan and Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

THE ONLY CHILD IS COMING HOME BUT not for any special celebration.

US Army Sgt. Myla L. Maravillosa is making the trip back to the Philippines to lie beside the grave of her grandfather in Barangay U-og in the Bohol town of Inabanga.

The 24-year-old Filipino-American woman, who finished high school in Bohol and later served in the United States military, was killed in a Christmas Eve attack by insurgents in northern Iraq.

Eleven days earlier, insurgents killed another Filipino-American soldier, this time in a town near Baghdad.

A rocket-propelled grenade attack on Dec. 24 killed Maravillosa near Hawijah, the US Defense Department's website said.

Her death drew expressions of sympathy from the Philippine government, addressed both to her Hawaii-based family and hometown relatives in Bohol.

Killed on Dec. 13 was Army Spc. Peter Navarro, 20, of Wildwood, Missouri.

He was one of the four US troops killed in an attack in Taji, a town 12 miles north-

2 FIL-AM/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2005

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Central and Eastern Luzon and Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers becoming widespread rains over the Bicol region including Quezon and Aurora provinces and Eastern Visayas. Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY: JAMIE ALARCON, PDI RESEARCH/12/30/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

BSP bullish on peso next year

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS SAID THE peso could hit 52 to the US dollar as the optimism generated by hefty dollar remittances by overseas Filipinos and the country's improving fiscal climate spill into the new year.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the central bank was reviewing its previous official forecast that the peso would average between 55 and 57 versus the US currency next year. The market's projections ranged between 52 and 53.5 next year.

"The reading of the market is very possible considering that we already hit 53.03," Tetangco told reporters, referring to the peso's high level in yesterday's trading.

The central bank chief made the statement following yesterday's year-end closing of the peso at 53.09 against the dollar, which he said made the local currency the best performing in Asia in terms of year-to-date appreciation.

The 53.09-to-a-dollar closing of the peso reflected a 6.1-percent appreciation from the 56.28-to-a-dollar year-end closing for 2004, Tetangco said.

He added that the peso's volatility, or average fluctuation, stood at 1.4 percent for 2005, one of the lowest in Asia.

The intra-day high of 53.03 against the dollar yesterday was the highest since May 2003. Volume of trade yesterday reached $138.63 million.

Tetangco said the expected continued growth of remittances from overseas Filipino workers and the increase in the value-added tax (VAT) rate in February were factors that would help maintain a healthy local currency.

The BSP had said earlier that OFW remittances in 2005 were expected to reach a historic high of $12.3 billion, including money sent through informal channels.

The government expects to collect some P81.4 billion in additional revenues a year starting in 2006 as a result of the new VAT law, which expanded its coverage and provided for the rate increase in February. In addition, officials had said that as a result of the higher tax collection, the government would be able to wipe out its budget deficit as early as 2008 instead of 2010 as previously projected.

The deficit stood at P184.6 billion last year and was seen to fall between P160 billion and P165 billion for the whole of 2005.

Meanwhile, the Philippine unit of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC), said President Macapagal-Arroyo could take credit for the peso's spectacular climb in the past three months.

Jose Arnulfo Veloso, treasury chief of HSBC Philippines, said the peso's climb to its highest level in 30 months was no fluke and that dollars coming in from overseas Filipino workers were not the only reason fueling the local currency's surge.

"The peso's rise is a manifestation of the overwhelming positive sentiment of investors on the economy," Veloso said. "For the first time in a long while, investors believe that somebody is clearly moving towards what is needed."

He cited the President's determination to raise the expanded value added tax from 10 percent to 12 percent by February next year despite opposition from both her critics and supporters.

"A lot of politicians point to her poor ratings in opinion surveys, but there is no better rating for the President than the peso exchange rate," Veloso said, adding, "The President has clearly shown that she was prepared to take the bitter pill in solving the country's fiscal problems no matter how unpopular these moves may be."

Exporters are unloading their dollars, importers are not hedging and foreign investors are buying Philippine bonds and stocks, all in anticipation of the government being on its way to fixing its chronic budget deficit and the peso continuing to reach higher ground, he said.

The peso is not the only indicator of the renewed investor confidence in the country.

The spread on the country's bonds (or the premium over benchmark US Treasury notes that investors will demand for risking to invest in the country's IOUs) has also been narrowing – from its peak of 600 basis points six months ago to only 247 basis points at present, Veloso noted.

Thus, an upgrade in the country's credit rating was a forgone conclusion, according to him.

"Why did Moody's downgrade the country a few months ago? Because of the delay in the VAT and the political situation. We believe that this two issues have been addressed and we expect an upgrade in the country's outlook from negative to stable to possibly positive within the next few months," Veloso said. *With a report from Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

Let's move on, GMA urges Pinoys

ENDING WHAT MAY WELL HAVE been the most horrible year of her presidency, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday appealed anew to Filipinos to move on and face the New Year with hope and with the interest of the country at heart.

"Let us break from the past and face a brave new future," the President said in her New Year message, which Malacañang released three days before 2005 ends.

"The strengthening of the peso is a sign that in the New Year, a beautiful tomorrow is awaiting us," she said.

Ms Arroyo said the renewed strength of the peso "continues to be a rallying point for the economic future of the country, especially as the New Year comes along and we aim for higher goals."

The message was also aired yesterday in a live television broadcast from Baguio City where the President is spending the holidays.

Ms Arroyo promised the country better governance in 2006 but good governance will soon cost 300 of her own close aides their jobs, Malacañang sources said here.

The Office of the President will not be excluded from Ms Arroyo's streamlining and bureaucratic rationalization program that is expected to take effect next year, they said.

Ferdinand Gaite, president of the militant Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage), said the group also received confirmation that the OP was studying a reduction in its 500-person staff.

Gaite said the New Year will leave Ms Arroyo open to protests from two fronts: Opposition forces that want her to resign for alleged cheating in the 2004 elections and government employees who will be jobless by April.

The President said government streamlining was one of her administration's four key priorities next year to complement the progress made at revitalizing the economy.

"The peso's strong performance is a sign that the new year brings hope. We proved that we can focus our resources into seeking out solutions and maintain that focus for the public good," she said.

In a bid to promote her campaign to amend the Constitution by next year, the President also called for changes in the "rotten" political system.

"We recognize that the Philippines today is divided between a country that is ready to rise economically and a country that is obstructed by a damaged political system... Political change is the handmaiden of permanent economic prosperity," she said.

It will be a working holiday today for the President who will be heading for Isabela province to meet with disaster officials on how to deal with flooded provinces.

The President said she had instructed Gen. Glen Rabonza (ret.), executive director of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, to provide more support for flood-threatened areas.

"The flood threatened areas are the seaboard of the country: Cagayan and Isabela provinces, Aurora, Quezon, Camarines Norte up to Eastern Samar, and all those provinces on that route, Agusan-Surigao-Davao," the President said.

She said the budget department had released P66 million for the repair of the dike in Calapan, Oriental Mindoro, that collapsed after the heavy rains of the past few weeks. *Christine Avendaño and Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

'More hope than fear'

MOST FILIPINOS BELIEVE the new year will be better for the country and for themselves, according to the latest survey of the Social Weather Stations polling group.

Eighty-five percent of adult Filipinos interviewed by SWS said they would face the New Year with hope, compared to 12 percent who said they would enter 2006 with fear.

Results of the nationwide 4th quarter Social Weather Survey conducted from Nov. 27 to Dec. 4 were released yesterday.

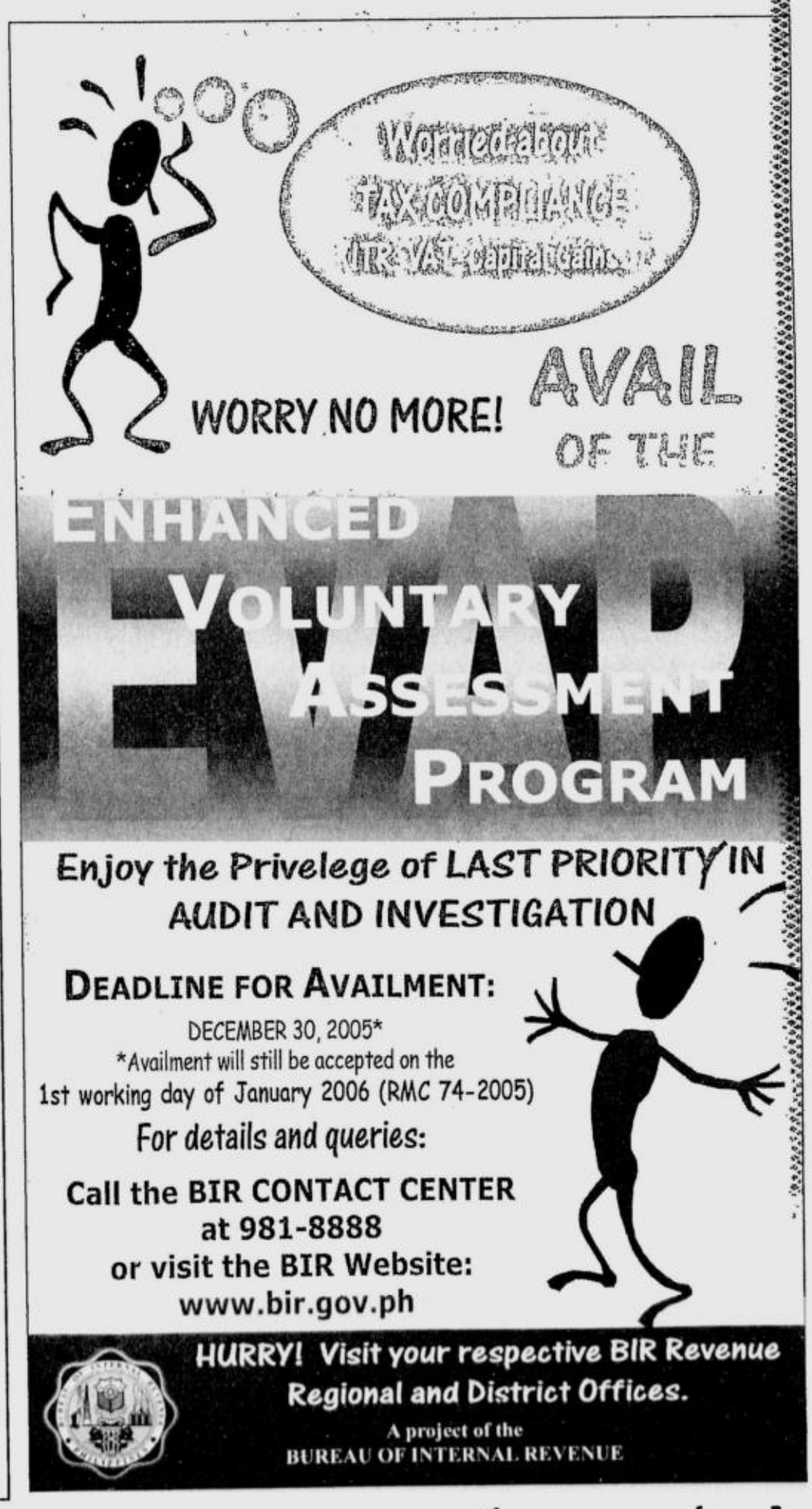
The survey showed hopefulness about the coming year was widespread in all regions. It was highest in the Visayas at 88 percent, followed by Metro Manila, 87 percent, 84 percent in Mindanao and 83 percent in the rest of Luzon.

Fear was highest in Mindanao at 14 percent. Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon and the Visayas each registered 11-percent fear levels.

By comparison, Filipinos' hope-to-fear ratio concerning 2005 stood at 81:18, the highest percentage of fear recorded in the past five years.

SWS said hope had always come out on top since it introduced the question, "Is it with hope or with fear that you enter the coming year?" in its 2000 yearend poll.

Hope for the new year was highest among the D economic class with 87 percent, compared to the 83 percent among the very poor E class and only 73 percent in the middle-to-upper ABC classes. *Jamie Alarcon, PDI Research*



You can drink, but don't get drunk, police told

By Luige A. del Puerto

YOU CAN DRINK, BUT YOU CAN'T GET drunk.

This was among the police leadership's last-minute reminders to cops, especially those who will be off duty, as the country inches its way toward the New Year.

"Actually, they can drink if they are off duty. But as responsible cops, they should remain sober and be immediately available during emergencies," said Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police.

"They should not be staggering about," Bataoil added in Filipino.

Ground commanders have been ordered to form task forces to monitor cases of indiscriminate firing. These task forces will be jointly overseen by the police and military to avoid friction in cases where a soldier is caught firing his or her gun.

The 118,000-strong police force has been divided into two work shifts to allow everyone to spend part of the holidays with their families. Group A worked through Christmas while Group B will report for work on New Year's Day.

Bataoil also advised off-duty policemen not to leave their areas of responsibility, in case the police force is placed on full alert and they would be needed at the police stations.

Cops have to keep their mobile phones and radios on so they could monitor what is happening and could be easily reached by their superiors.

"Not getting drunk, not leaving town, these are actually standard operating procedures," Bataoil said.

"Needless to say, we also want our cops to spend quality time with their families," he said.

Bataoil explained that often, it is the off-duty policeman who is in the best position to respond in an emergency.

"We have produced acts of heroism out of our off-duty cops. Sometimes, it is the off-duty policeman who can respond, who is given the opportunity to react, and that is why he or she must be alert," he said.

Early this week, the police started sealing the muzzles of their service firearms, a practice aimed at discouraging cops from firing their guns to celebrate the New Year. Police officials have warned that those caught violating this directive would be dealt with severely.

The police has also urged private citizens and other armed groups, including rebels, to keep their fingers off the trigger.

It is not the military's practice to seal the muzzles of their firearms on New Year's Eve. Instead there are the usual reminders that soldiers found to have injured or killed anyone through indiscriminate firing would be punished.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga has not issued a general order to do so, but yesterday he said he was leaving it up to ground commanders to decide if it was necessary to seal the muzzles of soldiers' firearms with masking tape to discourage indiscriminate firing. *With a report from Donna Pazzibugan*

Airline apologizes to Mark Jimenez

NORTHWEST AIRLINES HAS APOLOGIZED to ex-congressman Mark Jimenez and the other Filipino passengers of Flight 71 who claimed to have suffered discrimination in the hands of the airline personnel while on an unscheduled stopover in Narita, Japan, earlier this month.

"At this time, we sincerely apologize that Rep. Mark Jimenez and the other passengers on board Northwest Flight 71 last Dec. 18, 2005, had a less than satisfactory experience," said Patricia Celis, marketing communications manager of Northwest's Manila office.

Celis said the United States-based carrier would be investigating the incident.

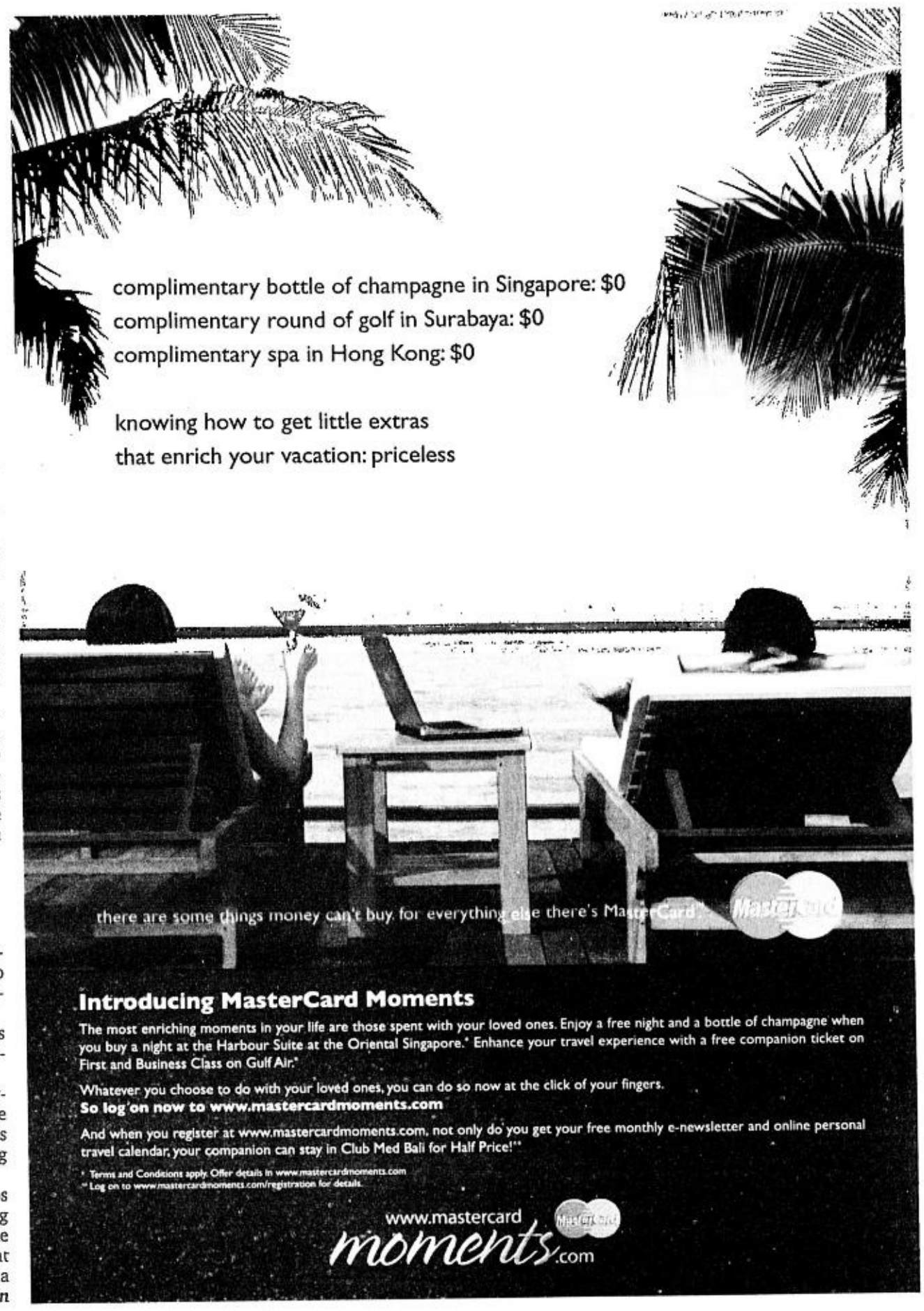
Jimenez, who was returning to the Philippines after serving a two-year prison sentence in the US, earlier announced he would lead his fellow passengers in filing a class suit against Northwest "to show the world that we Filipinos fight for our rights."

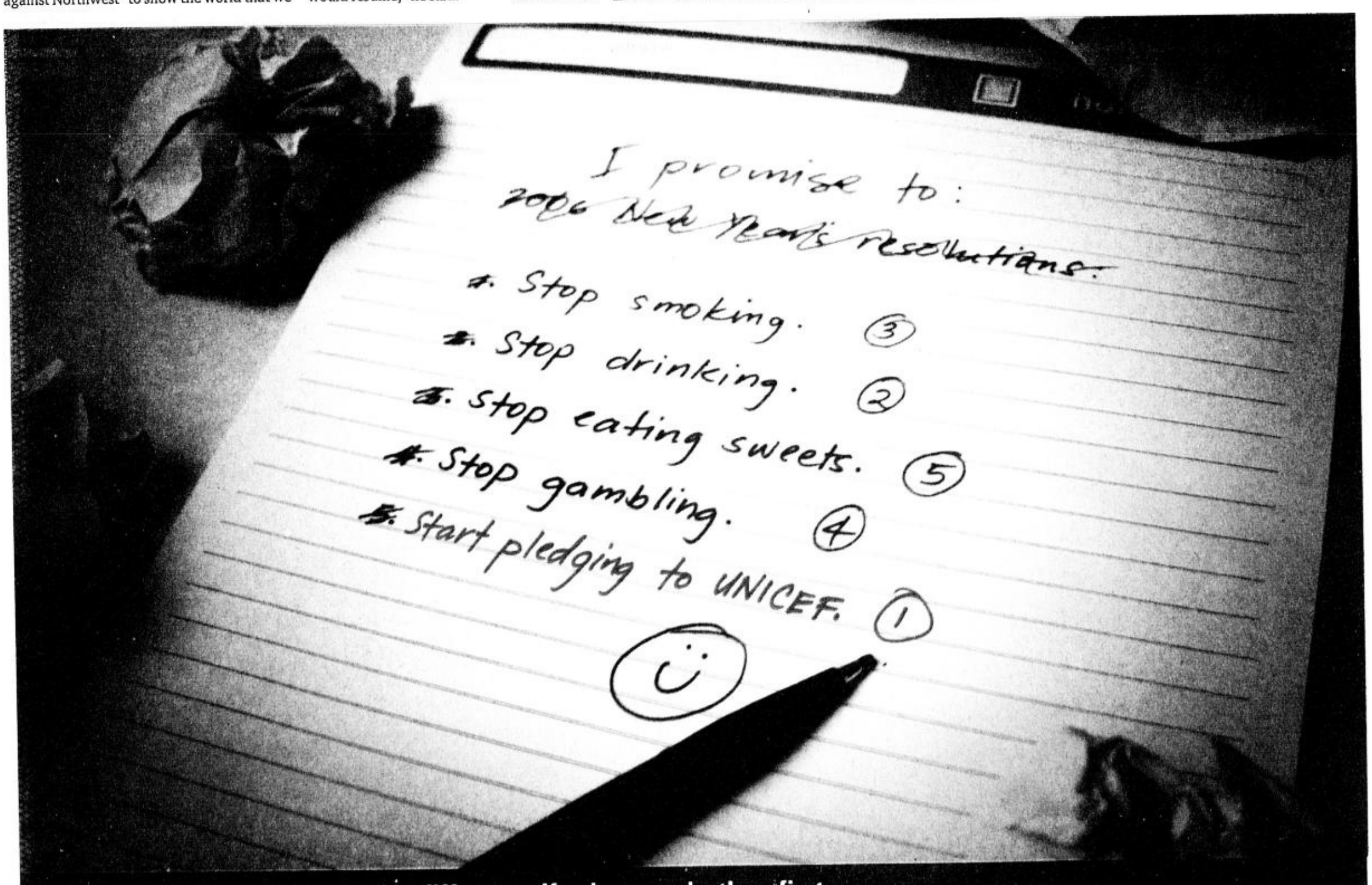
He said he would be calling on all the Filipino passengers on Northwest Flight 71 who experienced the alleged discourtesy of the airline staff at Narita.

The flight, which originated in Detroit, was delayed for 14 hours because of aircraft troubles and inclement weather.

Jimenez said the airline personnel arranged hotel accommodations for the Japanese passengers but not for the Filipinos who were left to wait at the airport's waiting lounge.

"Northwest personnel gave the Filipinos the cold shoulder treatment while denying them even the most basic information like how long they were supposed to wait it out at the airport and when the flight to Manila would resume," he said. *Nikko Dizon*





Some promises can have a lasting difference. If only we make them first.

This year, your promise can make a difference in the lives of children, through UNICEF and our Pangako para sa Pangarap Program. With your monthly pledge donation, you can help give children better chances for a brighter future – with better education, healthcare and protection from exploitation and abuse. All it takes is P10 a day and your commitment to see it through. Make their dreams your priority in the new year. Start by calling UNICEF today at 758-1000, or by visiting www.unicef.org/philippines.

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31/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue, 1200 Makati City
Philippines

unicef

Pangako para sa Pangarap

GIs detailed, not detained

From page A1

Subic Bay Freeport, a former US naval base.

Four of them—along with the Filipino van driver Timoteo Soriano—were formally charged on Tuesday, namely, SSgt. Chad Carpentier and Lance Corporals Dominic Duplantis, Daniel Smith and Keith Silkwood. The complaints against the two others were dismissed.

The embassy's deputy press attaché, Stacey MacTaggert, declined to comment on the soldiers' Jusmag assignment but reiterated that they were still in the Philippines under embassy custody.

No violation

Undersecretary Zosimo Paredes, executive secretary of the Presidential Commission on the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement, said he didn't see any violation of the VFA in having the four Marines on temporary detail at Jusmag.

"I will not be surprised to hear that they've been given that status. They are not on active duty and it's something internal to the US military," said Paredes, a former military officer.

In previous interviews, Paredes said he personally wanted to see how the embassy has been holding the accused soldiers, whether they were being "restricted to quarters" or allowed to move freely.

RP should claim custody

Representatives Edwin Uy (Lakas, Isabela), chair of the House committee on bases conversion and development, and Benasing Macarambon (NPC, Lanao del Sur), vice chair of the committee on national defense, said the country had a legal right to insist on custody of the accused once the court issues a warrant of arrest against them.

Uy, a lawyer, said that based on the Rules of Court, once the warrant is served, it would be the court that would decide where the Marines should be detained.

"While this case is complicated because of (the VFA) custody provision, the treaty cannot surrogate or supersede Philippine laws," Uy said.

Macarambon said treaties were entered into by the Philippine government based on existing laws.

Arrest warrant

"Hence, the US must comply with the warrant if served and let the lawyers file a petition to ask the court to detain the soldiers where they think it is appropriate or right for US custodial rights," he said.

Uy said the court should also conduct marathon hearings so that the case would be resolved within one year, the period within which cases under the VFA must be settled.

"It would be an injustice to the 22-year old Filipina victim if the case is not resolved in court just because the deadline has expired. The prosecutor must be conscious of the technicality in the case," he added.

"If a daily trial is impossible, then the trial must be scheduled three to four times a week," Macarambon said.

RP pressure

A militant lawyers group said Philippine authorities could "force" the US Embassy to surrender the four Americans once arrest warrants were issued.

Lawyer Neri Javier Colmenares, spokesperson of the Counsels for the Defense of Liberties (Codal), warned that any Filipino or foreign official who is not a diplomat and who obstructs a court-issued warrant could be imprisoned for up to six years.

"Police authorities serving the warrant against the accused have all the powers of the Philippine legal system to execute the warrant, by force if necessary, within 10 days from receipt of the warrant issued by a court," Colmenares said in a statement.

No bail

He said the accused Marines should be put under Philippine custody since, under the 1987 Constitution, a person charged with committing a capital offense "cannot post bail nor be released on recognizance, when the evidence of guilt is strong."

Colmenares said the VFA, which grants custody of an accused US national to the US, "cannot trump" the Constitution. *With reports from Philip C. Tubeza and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 Fil-Am soldiers killed in Iraq; one to be buried in Bohol

From page A1

west of Baghdad.

The St. Louis County media in Missouri ran stories on Navarro's death and funeral, which his relatives in the Philippines later relayed to the INQUIRER.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch counted him among the more than 2,150 American service members who have died in the US-led occupation of Iraq since 2003.

News about Maravillosa's death shocked her relatives in Inabanga.

They said that her mother, Estelita, who now lives in Hawaii, wanted to bury her daughter in U-og beside the grave of Estelita's father, Agapito Lumayag.

The relatives said they did not know when Myla's remains would arrive because they had yet to receive a call from Estelita, a former Inabanga elementary school teacher. Estelita now works in a hospital in Hawaii after studying to be a nursing aide.

Citing reports from the Philippine Embassy in Baghdad, Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo said Maravillosa died from wounds sustained in an insurgent attack while on routine patrol.

"We honor her bravery and unselfish dedication to the mission of bringing peace and democracy to Iraq as the Filipino people join the freedom-loving people of Iraq in their efforts to rebuild their country and establish democratic governance," Romulo said in a statement yesterday.

"I convey the heartfelt condolences of the Filipino people to the family of Sergeant Maravillosa in their hour of grief over the death of a loved one that happened on Christmas Eve," he added.

The US Department of Defense will attend to all the funeral requirements of Maravillosa because she was a US citizen and US Army soldier, according to Romulo.

Maravillosa, from Wahiawa, Hawaii, was assigned to the US Army Reserve's 203rd Military Intelligence Battalion, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

"The conflict in Iraq, according to polls and pundits, grows more unpopular by the day. But on Friday, standing in the middle of a sea of white tombstones—each marking a fallen soldier, Marine, sailor—no one was thinking of politics," the Saint Louis Post-Dispatch report read.

Shocked relatives

Lucresia Requerme, of Barangay U-og, was crying when the INQUIRER interviewed her over the phone yesterday because she still could not believe her first cousin was dead. U-og is 6 km from the town proper and 66 km north of Tagbilaran City.

"We were shocked," Requerme said.

Myla and her mother Estelita Lumayag-Maravillosa had been living in Hawaii since the 1990s, moving there when Myla was only 16 and had just graduated from high school.

The two moved to Hawaii with the help of Estelita's sister who was based there.

Requerme described Myla as a simple but very determined woman.

MARAVILLOSA

NAVARRO

Christmas cards

Her elder brother, Procopio Lumayag, said their cousin was "very thoughtful and caring."

Procopio recalled that Myla never forgot to send them Christmas cards every year, except this Christmas season.

Brynell Hermoso, Myla's classmate in elementary school, described her as a bright student who always landed in the honor's list. He said Myla was also a good and kind friend.

Myla graduated from U-og Elementary School and took her secondary education at the Holy Spirit School in Tagbilaran.

Toy guns, not dolls

When she was young, Myla was not a typical girl who loved to play with dolls. She preferred toy guns and other things that boys loved to play with, according to Requerme.

She said a career in the military was not Myla's first choice.

At first, Myla wanted to take up fine arts but her mother wanted her to become a nurse. This was when Myla decided to pursue her second interest—becoming a soldier.

Requerme recalled that when Myla went to her mother's hometown last year, they asked her to change careers because her job was risky.

But she said Myla merely smiled and replied that she would continue to serve as a soldier because she had already passed the training.

Mayor Josephine Socorro Jumamoy said she would discuss with town officials what they could do when Maravillosa's remains arrive. She said she would propose a posthumous award for her.

"I was told that there is a vacant pantheon near the site where her grandfather is buried," Jumamoy said.

Requerme, for her part, said she was instructed by Estelita to fix up their house in U-og and the niche where Myla would be buried.

The mayor said Myla was Estelita's only child.

Jumamoy said she immediately sent policemen to the Lumayags' house in U-og where they were able to talk to Mariano, Estelita's brother.

From Mariano, Jumamoy said they learned that Estelita went to Hawaii after her husband, known only as Berting, died.

Estelita lived with her sister Bernalda Rodriguez. Myla was initially left in the care of her relatives before Estelita sent for her.

Another aunt also named Lucresia is in Hawaii.

Estelita has another brother, Cipriano, who also remained in the village, according to Jumamoy.

Embassy says 2 GIs cleared now in Okinawa

From page A1

and Lara included among the accused.

In documents submitted to the court, Olongapo City Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni alleged that Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith raped the 22-year-old woman inside the van while his fellow Marines cheered him on to the beat of loud music.

'No force, no drugs'

Also charged were Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis and SSgt. Chad Carpentier.

Smith's lawyer, Benjamin Formoso, said his client was not worried about the charge, saying Smith maintains he only had "consensual sex."

"There was no force, no violence, no drugs whatsoever administered on her," Formoso said in a telephone interview. "There was no rape."

Custody fight

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said Wednesday that a possible battle loomed over custody of the four accused Marines, with Manila and Washington both insisting on custody.

Lawmakers and prosecutors urged the government to demand custody to ensure the accused would be arraigned, did not flee the country, and the country's sovereignty was upheld.

The case, seen as a crucial test of the accord allowing American troops to train in the Philippines, will not affect bilateral ties, Malacañang has said. *With a report from AP*

Corrections

YESTERDAY'S front page story—"Why the doctor is in, and working in barrios"—misstated that the town of Bindoy is in Negros Occidental. It is in Negros Oriental.

* * *

IN THE DEC. 28 issue, a story on Page A18—"Riley concocts 'huge' idea to help Shaq"—misstated Shaquille O'Neal's kilogram weight equivalent. His 340-pound weight is equal to 154 kg—not 104 kg.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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How to ...

From page A1

rify them to death.

Radio reports during previous New Year revelries had it that some dogs with heart problems had suffered heart attacks after hearing exploding firecrackers.

Animal experts have noted that many animals can feel pain from loud sounds that are otherwise tolerable to humans. What could be the harmless bang of a "five-star" or "*bawang*" firecracker to humans is equivalent to an explosion of a small bomb or hand grenade to dogs.

Animal welfare advocates, such as the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), are urging owners to keep their pets indoors and insulated from the noise, at least during the peak of the New Year revelry.

"All those loud explosions can scare them and make them nervous. It is (also) good practice not to have visitors go near your dogs at this time, as they might (be hostile) due to stress," said Oscar Lei, a PAWS member who used to manage the group's animal shelter.

Acute hearing

Dogs hear at a wider range of frequencies than humans do, data from Laura Hungerford, a research scientist and veterinarian at the University of Nebraska, indicated.

The low end of the range is similar, but dogs hear noises up to 45 kHz, while humans only hear sounds up to about 23 kHz. This means that they could be hearing and responding to sounds that we can't hear at all.

Cats can hear sounds as high as 64 kHz, bats up to 110 kHz and porpoises up to 150 kHz, according to the study. Young people generally have more acute hearing than older ones.

The study indicated that dogs could feel pain from sounds that aren't painfully loud to humans. Very loud noise can hurt the ears and if a sound seems too loud to humans, it is probably more so to dogs.

Lei advises pet owners to have music playing in the room where the pets would be kept, as the music would help muffle the explosions outside. This would also minimize the effects of sudden explosions in between lulls.

Although not all pets are afraid of loud noises, such as exploding firecrackers, there have been cases of dogs suffering heart attacks during the peak of the New Year blasts, according to Dr. Bubut Carlos, city veterinarian of Marikina.

Carlos goes as far as advising pet owners to put cotton swabs in their dogs' ears.

"The important thing here is that people should understand that pets get hurt (just by hearing exploding firecrackers)," he said.

Smoke from fireworks, burning tires and garbage can also be harmful to animals. "Not only do loud noises affect their sensitive hearing, the stench of smoke can irritate their equally sensitive noses," Lei said.

The morning after New Year's Eve, pet owners are also advised to refrain from letting their dogs out, as they could step on unexploded firecrackers and then lick their paws. Gunpowder, mixed with animal feces, is highly poisonous once ingested.

Dr. Ryan Hernandez, a veterinarian at the Makati Dog and Cat Hospital, observed that most pets rushed to the emergency room after New Year celebrations had ingested gunpowder from unburned firecrackers.

320 troops join ...

From page A1

tries, the military said in a statement.

This will be the fifth peacekeeping mission the country is sending to Liberia and the second one to Haiti.

Two other batches are to depart for the two countries two weeks from now.

In Haiti, police and an 8,860-strong UN peacekeeping force have pledged to restore security, which evaporated after the February 2004 rebellion that toppled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Widespread kidnappings have been a key concern as the Jan. 8 presidential and parliamentary elections approach.

In Liberia, some 15,000 UN peacekeepers are helping keep the calm following presidential elections in November that raised hopes the West African nation would move past a war that killed 200,000 people.

The latest contingent to Liberia is headed by Army Col. Mario Mendoza, who replaced Col. Manuel Ochotorena.

Heading the fresh contingent to Haiti is Col. Cesar Sedillo, who replaced Lt. Col. Nestor Merginio.

All expenses paid

The United Nations will shoulder all the expenses during the soldiers' six-month tour of duty, including air fare, billeting, subsistence and other expenses.

Members of both contingents will receive a monthly allowance equivalent to 250 percent of their base pay for officers and 300 percent for enlisted personnel.

Despite the killing of a Filipino peacekeeper in Haiti in April, the Philippines has continued to provide assistance to the Caribbean nation as part of a commitment to help the United Nations provide humanitarian help there, the military said.

In April, SSgt. Antonio Batomalaque was killed during a rebel attack in Haiti. He was recently given recognition by the US government for saving an American military officer during the attack.

Around the same time, Navy Lt. Senior Grade Valentin Menpin and Marine Sgt. Geoffrey Gesiani, who were also part of the peacekeeping force in Haiti, went AWOL (absent without leave) while on R&R (rest and recreation) in the United States. *Reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan and AP*

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Rizal martyrdom: The making of a national hero

From page A1

Even as he denied all charges against him and his sister Lucia over libelous leaflets found in their possession, Rizal was hustled off in the middle of the night on July 14, 1892 and deported to Dapitan, where he lived in exile for over four years.

After the Philippine Revolution broke out on Aug. 24, 1896, he was charged before the military courts for reasons known only to the Spanish colonial administrators.

A one-page, uniface, undated document, which translated into the official complaint against Rizal by three Catholic priests Nicanor, Fuente and Corpus, recently surfaced and has been authenticated by the National Historical Institute.

In gist, Rizal was accused of fighting the establishment, blamed for calling people to arms against the colonial rulers and charged with slander against the Roman Catholic priesthood in the Philippines.

A court-martial condemned him to death and his execution was set for Wednesday, Dec. 30, 1896, at 7 in the morning.

Swift sentence

No appeal could be made to the peninsular government in Spain. There was no time for any remedy. Not even the Katipunan could launch any attempt to free Rizal because of tight security.

At 7:03 a.m., Rizal was facing Manila Bay when the guns were fired. He veered his body toward his right as he fell dead.

The firing squad was composed of six native Filipino soldiers under the command of the Volunteer Soldiers of Maria Cristina (some references counted eight men).

Descendants of one of the executioners, Adolfo Pastor Quetcuti, narrated how the captain of the guards put only one live bullet in one of the rifles, while placing blanks in the others. This was intended to ease the guilt feelings of those in the firing squad who believed Rizal was innocent.

As an additional measure, another line of peninsular soldiers stood behind them.

Quetcuti's descendants also spoke of how their family had suffered and experienced unfortunate events from the time of Rizal's execution up to today.

Was that karma?

No proper burial

Rizal's family and friends begged to be given his body so that they could give it a proper burial. But the Spanish authorities refused.

A persistent search helped Rizal's sister, Narcisa, find out where his remains had been buried. After going to all the Manila cemeteries, she found the gate of the Paco Cemetery open. There, she saw a patch of freshly turned earth.

Body claimed

After some persuasion of the parish clerk, a marble slab was placed to mark where the body was buried. The slab bore three letters "R.P.J.," Rizal's initials in reverse.

In August 1898, after American troops overran Manila, Narcisa, her daughter Angelica and some friends went to the cemetery to claim Rizal's body. They found it had been buried directly in the earth without any wrapping or coffin. Rizal's clothes were still recognizable but his shoes had rotted away.

The remains were taken to Narcisa's house where the bones were washed and placed in an ivory urn.

A vertebra with a bullet hole was separated from the rest and placed in a glass reliquary jar. This is now displayed at the Rizal Shrine in Fort Santiago.

Honor by decree

In 1898, President Emilio Aguinaldo issued a decree declaring Dec. 30 a national holiday in honor of Rizal and the nation's other revolutionary heroes. It was to be a day of mourning, with the national flag flown at half-staff.

From then on, every Dec. 30, Rizal's remains were paraded in a procession and enshrined in an altar.

In 1901, journalist Pascual H. Poblete conceived the idea of building a monument in Rizal's honor at the Luneta.

US Governor General William Howard Taft, taking up the proposal, created an independent commission for the establishment of the Rizal Monument. An international design contest was held.

In 1907, the commission announced the two winners of the contest. The first prize went to Prof. Carlos Nicoli of Carrara, Italy, while the second prize went to Dr. Richard Kissling of Zurich, Switzerland. *(See story on Page A1).*

Monument's folly

The commission asked both Nicoli and Kissling to submit their proposed budgets for the monument. Kissling submitted a lower figure and was awarded the project.

Nicoli sued the commission for "breach of promise." He won and obtained damages.

On Dec. 23, 1907, the First Philippine Assembly approved a resolution sanctioning Rizal's proclamation as national hero and keeping Dec. 30 as a national holiday.

Before 1912, the urn containing Rizal's bones was placed in a magnificently designed small wooden coffin.

The cornerstone laying of the monument at the Luneta on Rizal Day in 1912 generated a huge crowd, like a funeral interment on a grand scale.

The coffin containing Rizal's remains and other artifacts was deposited in the center of the base over which the monument would rise.

The monument was finally erected on April 26, 1913, by Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific Co.

Proper memorial

It is a pity that to this day the nation honors its foremost national hero by displaying a vertebra at a shrine in Fort Santiago.

Shouldn't the piece of bone, which seems to desecrate his memory, be finally buried to avoid karma?

Monument that never was won contest for Rizal memorial

From page A1

ment should have been the one standing today at Manila's Rizal Park, or Luneta.

But by some twist of fate, its Italian sculptor was not able to carry the project through.

Submitted by Prof. Carlos Nicoli of Carrara in Tuscany, Italy, the plaster scale model for the marble monument called "Al Martir de Bagumbayan" (To the Martyr of Bagumbayan) bested 40 other entries during the 1905-07 international competition for the monument's design authorized by the American colonial government.

A second choice

"Nicoli's entry was definitely much more elaborate. It evoked the design of national monuments in Italy, Spain and Latin America," De Viana told the INQUIRER.

The actual monument now standing at Rizal Park, with its prominent obelisk, was the work of second-placer Dr. Richard Kissling of Zurich, Switzerland, and named "Motto Stella" (Guiding Star).

It was also Kissling who sculpted in 1895 the popular monument to Swiss hero William Tell.

Scanty accounts of how Nicoli's entry was cast aside are conflicting. Even scholars seem to differ. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

Question of money?

Extant newspaper and magazine articles, as well as research work by NHI experts and other historians, point out that the most probable reason was Nicoli's inability to post a performance bond of P20,000.

"The bond is deposited as a guarantee that the sculptor will finish the project based on the specifications of the entry that he submitted," De Viano explained. "Maybe Nicoli was poor or wasn't able to raise the required amount—we'll never know."

However, National Commission for Culture and the Arts researcher and art professor Robert Paulino cited some sources as saying that Nicoli failed to show up on the date for the signing of the job contract.

Winning entries lost

Another narrative, he said, stated that the contract was awarded to Kissling because his quotation was lower than Nicoli's. There was even a report of a complaint filed by Nicoli in court.

Kissling's five-foot Rizal statue, modeled after the last known studio photograph Rizal posed for in Madrid around 1891, stands on a base of granite blocks below an obelisk. It depicts Rizal in a winter coat holding a copy of each of his two novels, "Noli me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo."

To Rizal's left is a figure of a mother and that of a boy poring over a book—presumably the hero being taught his lessons by his mother, Teodora Alonzo. To the right, a mother suckles an infant—probably La Madre Filipina or the Motherland.

The details and specifications of the four winning entries have apparently been lost. The NHI has only the photos of several entries provided by the American Historical Committee and a private collector.

Remembering Nicoli

The plaster-scale miniature models are also unaccounted for. They are believed to have either been destroyed in the Second World War, crumbled due to age, or are stored in a museum somewhere in the United States.

Of the four winners, only Kissling's was different in style. The others had Rizal standing on a pedestal with a winged female figure hovering behind him, and were divided into several levels with more standing or sitting figures.

"Among his (Nicoli's) plans were the use of marble from Italy, in contrast to the unpolished granite now at Luneta, and the incorporation of more elaborate figurative elements," Paulino said.

De Viana hopes a tangible remembrance of Nicoli's forgotten monument could be erected.

"Nicoli's concept should not be put to waste. It was judged the best and should be somehow honored," De Viana said.

He said Nicoli's monument could be erected in a future park or shrine, perhaps during Rizal's 150th death anniversary or 200th birth anniversary. Or in a future plaza wherever the country's capital may be transferred, as some urban planners are proposing.

A people's monument

For De Viana, the important thing is for the community to be involved.

The construction of Kissling's monument was preceded by years of fund raising.

"[It] is truly a people's monument, a product of the *bayanihan* spirit, because it was built with contributions and voluntary labor of all kinds of Filipinos," De Viana said.

The Rizal Monument and Rizal Park trace their origins to a 1901 Philippine Assembly Act "granting the right to use public land upon the Luneta ... upon which to erect a statue of Jose Rizal."

As conceived in the Act, the monument would not merely consist of a statue, but also include a mausoleum to hold Rizal's remains.

P100,000 to the winner

The estimated cost of the monument was P100,000, but by January 1905, the target had been exceeded. When the nationwide fund-raising ended in 1912, the collection totaled P135,195.61.

The contest for the monument's design offered P100,000 to the winner (*or $50,000, based on the P2-$1 exchange rate at the time—PDI Research*) and P50,000 to the runner-up.

Artists from Europe and America submitted entries in plaster-cast models.

The awards jury were all Americans. None were artists, architects or engineers.

Shipped in pieces from Europe and assembled in the Philippines, Kissling's bronze-and-granite monument was unveiled on Rizal Day in 1913 near the spot where Rizal was executed.

'Now, he belongs to us'

After the unveiling, several newspapers criticized the monument. One daily satirized it in a cartoon, describing it as "*vulgar y tosco* (coarse)." Nationalists said it was a foreign production.

Its "foreignness" spurred a 2002 paper by Vicente L. Rafael of the University of Washington's history department.

"Linking disparate linguistic regions and social groups inside and outside the archipelago, Rizal's image was deemed capable of transmitting messages from outside to those inside the colony and vice versa," Rafael said.

This foreignness, however, had been by and large domesticated with the "monumentalization" of Rizal. This, Rafael said, "seems to be saying that he now belongs to 'us,' that 'we'—Filipinos not Spaniards—claim him as our own."

A shield during war

"'We' heard his message, which was meant only for 'us,' and we responded by rendering to him the recognition denied by Spanish authorities. His memory is now 'our' property," the historian added.

The monument soon gained popular acceptance and began appearing on stamps, paper currency, books, postcards and other souvenir items.

One little known fact is that during the Allied Liberation of Manila in 1945, the monument served as a shield for civilians from Japanese snipers and American shelling.

Lost grandeur

The park itself has become the scene of Independence Day celebrations and presidential inaugurations. The President-elect swears to do justice to every man not just before spectators but also, in effect, before Rizal's very grave.

In the postwar depression, the park lost its grandeur and became littered with filth. It gained notoriety as a center of crime, promiscuity and mendicancy. Its trees, for some, became public urinals.

In the '60s, Mayor Antonio Villegas launched efforts to restore its image. This was pursued by the National Parks Development Committee headed by then First Lady Eva Macapagal and journalist Teodoro Valencia.

How tall is it?

De Viana said one negative point raised against the monument was its size. Depending on the source, it is either 12.7 or 14 meters tall.

"The monument is not actually that big enough to be awe-inspiring, unlike the Lincoln Memorial in Washington," he said. "Also, because one cannot touch it, there seems to be a lack of connection between the visitors and the entombed Rizal."

Renovations brought the park back to life.

A wall inscribed with Rizal's poem "Mi Ultimo Adios" was added. An honor guard watched over it 24 hours a day.

Also erected nearby was a fountain—a 1964 gift from the village of Wilhelmsfeld near Heidelberg—where Rizal was said to have gone drinking during his years in Germany.

Missing it all

The monument also became known as "Kilometer Zero," from which distances from Manila to any point of the Philippines are reckoned.

And so there it has stood for 92 years, lashed by storms and scorched by the sun, seemingly watching over New Year revelers, beggars, lovers intertwined under trees, new presidents bearing new if empty promises.

Whether it is 12.7 or 14 meters tall doesn't seem to matter to anyone at all.

Perhaps Nicoli might have wanted to have been part of it all.

Centenarian cannot forget Man from Calamba

From page A1

Carmen turned 100 years old on July 19.

Aside from seeing the monument of the man she knew from his handwritten letters to her father, as well as the stories her father had told her, she goes to the park that in Rizal's time was called Bagumbayan for some fresh air.

She can walk with the help of an aide or a cane. Most of the time, she's wheeled around the park for as long as she wants to, sometimes till the sun goes down.

Carmen remembers her father and Rizal so well, describing them as extraordinary men living in extraordinary times.

Both were prolific writers, she said. At the Ponces' four-bedroom, three-story house in Baliuag, then considered one of the biggest houses in Bulacan, she learned of Rizal's world through his handwritten letters, articles and pictures he sent her father.

Great pain

Some of the letters showed "the man from Calamba" in great pain, she said; his heart bleeding seeing his own countrymen treated like slaves in their own land. Other letters told of Rizal's travels either in Hong Kong, Madrid or Berlin, asking Ponce to meet him secretly.

Secrets

Just like most men, Rizal and Ponce wrote down their thoughts about the women they had met and liked. The only difference perhaps, Carmen said, was that their writings were in elegant prose.

"I know all their secrets," Carmen told the INQUIRER in an interview. She simply smiled in response to a follow-up question.

Every time her father readied the family's *calesa* (horse-drawn carriage) for a long trip down south, it was an open secret in the household, she said, that he would go to Laguna to see Pepe, as Rizal was called.

There in Calamba, Rizal's place of birth, Ponce, Rizal and the third man of the propaganda triumvirate, Marcelo H. del Pilar would discourse on the state of the Church and country under a lamppost.

Awesome memorabilia

To Carmen's recollection, Rizal never set foot in the Ponce mansion, but her father had assembled and preserved an "awesome array" of revolutionary memorabilia of Rizal as well as of Del Pilar through correspondence.

Her father would also take home some of the trio's writings from abroad. All these letters and articles, she said, spoke volumes of the courage, brilliance and patriotism of the three young men.

Rizal, Del Pilar and Ponce stood at the forefront of the national movement in Spain seeking Philippine representation in the Spanish Cortez.

DAUGHTER OF A REVOLUTIONARY, Carmen Ponce-Villaroman, is now 100 years old but she has total recall and her memory is sharp.

Genius, statesman, student

A book written by Rolando Villacorte, also of Bulacan, described Rizal as the movement's genius, Del Pilar its statesman, and Ponce its student and scribe.

In his letters, Rizal repeatedly talked about how to liberate the Filipinos from slavery, she said. He kept talking about helping the poor and the sick.

Coming home from his many travels, Ponce would show up at the huge mansion with one or two Chinese or Japanese companions. These foreigners were visibly poor and Ponce would give them jobs either in the household or at the farm, Carmen said.

Historical treasures

Ponce related this experience to Rizal who in turn praised him in his next letter.

Ponce stored all of Rizal's letters and articles as well as the family's black and white photographs taken at the Baliuag house. A government historian later declared that these were priceless historical treasures, prompting the government to declare the house a national shrine.

MLQ a frequent visitor

When Manuel L. Quezon was Senate president, the government acquired a great part of the memorabilia. (Quezon was a frequent guest at the Ponce mansion, even staying overnight, Carmen said.)

Still, the Ponces left for themselves some personal collections they were not willing to give up. One of them was an undated huge picture of Rizal, Del Pilar and Ponce in colonial suits.

Kept in a thick and heavy wooden frame, the picture now occupies the premier corner of Carmen's new home in Filinvest 2 in Quezon City. Their Baliuag house burned down in May 1962.

Japanese mother

Carmen was born in Kowloon, Hong Kong. Her father met her mother Okiyo Udangwa, a Yokohama-born daughter of a samurai, in Tokyo. Ponce was the diplomatic representative of President Emilio Aguinaldo in Japan.

Ponce was Aguinaldo's secretary when the first Philippine Republic was established in Kawit, Cavite, on June 12, 1898. It was in Hong Kong that Ponce wrote the draft of the Constitution for a federal republic, which Aguinaldo carried with him when he returned to Cavite.

After Aguinaldo proclaimed the republic, he named Ponce as his diplomatic representative to Japan.

Love at first sight

Okiyo was a college student 18 years Ponce's junior, but she fell in love with him instantly. He was a boarder in her parents' house.

In no time, she left her family for love of Ponce and settled with him in Hong Kong, and later in the Philippines. That was the last time Okiyo's parents saw her. They never forgave her because they wanted a samurai to be her husband. But she never looked back.

'Never a Japanese husband'

Ponce brought home kimono-clad Okiyo to Baliuag in 1907 after 18 years of being away. With them were their two children, Carmen who was born in Kowloon and Pedro, born in Japan. Two other children were born in the Philippines.

Okiyo soon learned to speak Tagalog and discarded her kimono for the local *saya*. The locals would soon call her Kiyo San.

When Carmen and her sisters grew to become beautiful teenagers, Okiyo would repeatedly tell them to find a Filipino, "never a Japanese husband," according to Ponce's nephew Vicente, an 80-year-old engineer.

"The Filipinos make for better husbands," Vicente quoted her as saying.

Okiyo died in May 1942, wearing a *saya* as she had wished.

Carmen followed her mother's wish. She married Felipe Villaroman, a Filipino doctor. They settled in the family's ancestral house in Baliuag.

Sharp memory

She's now a widow, living with daughter Nelly. She's weak, but otherwise healthy for someone who is 100 years old, her daughter says.

Except for her hearing, Nelly says her mother is okay. She has total recall, her memory, sharp.

When provoked, Carmen talks continuously about her mother, her father, their families and Rizal. She paused a bit when asked to recall when their house burned down. The fire, she said, destroyed and erased everything they had.

But not the memories. She would go to Rizal Park today dressed in her Sunday best.

"Some things should not be allowed to be forgotten," she says. "Those left behind should always remember."

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2005

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bill on polygamy, divorce stirs outrage in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR—A REBELLION IS STIRRING IN MALAYSIA over new legislation which critics say undermines the rights of Muslim women by making it easier for men to take multiple wives and claim property after divorce.

The government was forced to strike down opposition in the usually tame upper house Senate to push through the bill last week, only to face an avalanche of protest from civil society groups and ordinary citizens.

Letters pages in the usually tightly-controlled media have also been full of complaints over the "Islamic Family Law" bill which affects Malaysia's Muslims, who make up about 60 percent of the population of 26 million people.

"Now I learn that if my husband were to marry another, he has the right to my property to support his new lifestyle!" wrote one outraged reader of the New Straits Times.

"Another provision makes it easier for men to obtain divorce ... it is hard to imagine how much easier it can be, given the current situation where men can divorce their wives for no reason and even via SMS," said another.

Malaysian Muslim men are allowed four wives under Islamic law, but under the new amendments they no longer have to prove they are financially capable of treating all their wives equally before taking on another.

On taking a new wife, men can now seize property belonging to existing wives, and they are also given new rights to claim assets after a divorce, as well as less obligation to pay compensation and maintenance.

"They are giving more rights to the men whilst taking back the traditional Muslim women's rights," said Razlina Razali from Sisters in Islam, one of several activist groups in an alliance demanding that the bill be abandoned.

"It's not justified under Islam because Islam promotes the principle of equality and justice, and traditionally it guards the rights of Muslim women," she said.

The provisions have already been rolled out in some states, and it hasn't taken long for the first casualties to emerge.

Zaidah Abdul Rahman, a 44-year-old mother of three, lived in the capital Kuala Lumpur for much of her two-decade marriage, but in 2004 her husband divorced her in their one-time home state of Johor Baru where the act is in force.

Soon she found her personal bank account and that of her oldest daughter frozen, and she was forced to sell her jewelry so she could pay the bills.

After giving up her career as a real estate agent because her husband wanted her to stay at home with their children, and years of being a dutiful corporate wife with many relocations, she is furious at being left with nothing.

Once well-off, her home is now in disrepair and she has been forced to take out a court order to prevent her husband from seizing her Volvo.

"I'm totally upset and fiercely opposed to the amendments which are against Islamic law, which forbids harshness against women," she told AFP. *AFP*

A HOMELESS man holds a child in his arms in cold winter conditions near Brussels' tourist Grand-Place/Groote Market, Dec. 28. Europe shivered Wednesday in the grip of an icy cold snap and blizzards. AFP

S. Korean panel deals knockout blow to stem cell, cloning claims

SEOUL—A SOUTH KOREAN PANEL DEALT A devastating blow to disgraced scientist Hwang Woo-suk on Thursday, concluding his once-celebrated team provided no data to prove a claim they had produced tailored embryonic stem cells.

The findings were another mark of disgrace for a man once heralded as a national hero for his pioneering work on stem cell and cloning research, who now faces possible criminal charges.

The panel will now review Hwang's 2004 paper on creating the first cloned human embryos for research and a claim he produced the world's first cloned dog—an Afghan hound named Snuppy.

Hwang did receive a bit of good news when a DNA lab in Seoul, which is not part of the panel's investigation, said testing they performed had indicated Snuppy was an actual clone. But that was a small ray of light on another somber day for the scientist.

"It is the panel's judgment that Professor Hwang's team does not have the scientific data to prove that they (patient-specific stem cells) were made," said Roe Jung-hye, chief of Seoul National University's research office.

The same investigation panel said last week that a 2005 paper produced by Hwang's team contained data that was intentionally fabricated and had undermined the fundamentals of science.

It said the team may have produced only two stem cell lines, not 11 as the authors of the landmark paper had claimed.

Roe told reporters on Thursday the final two lines that could have proved the fundamental findings of Hwang's team were not produced in Hwang's lab, but instead at a Seoul hospital.

"The findings of three labs showed the number two and number three stem cell lines that needed confirmation with regard to the 2005 paper did not match with patient tissue cells and were found to be fertilised-egg stem cells of MizMedi Hospital," Roe said.

The news sent biotech shares lower on the Seoul bourse.

The panel has asked three laboratories to conduct DNA tests on cells that were part of work by Hwang's team to see if they were stem cell lines with DNA that matches that of the donors.

Experts say the stem cell case is developing into one of the biggest incidents of scientific fraud in recent history: the next questions will be how was Hwang's team able to commit the fraud and just how many people were involved.

The South Korean government spent tens of millions of dollars to fund Hwang's research and used him in promotional material as a symbol of the country's advances in cutting-edge technologies.

Just two months ago, President Roh Moo-hyun opened a World Stem Cell Hub which was billed as a project to put the country at the forefront of the field.

Prosecutors have said Hwang could face a criminal probe for misappropriation of state funds if his work is proved fraudulent.

Hwang resigned from his post at the university last week and apologized. But he has insisted that patient-tailored embryonic stem cells are South Korean technology and it would be confirmed.

Hwang's work had been touted as having fulfilled a basic promise of embryonic stem cell studies, namely that one day genetically matched tissues could be transplanted in a patient to cure diseases such as diabetes and Alzheimer's.

"We believed that although the thesis may have been fabricated, there would at least be some hope that it was a new Korean technology. The announcement today drove all those hopes away and has made me feel emotionally drained," said Oh Il-hwan, Catholic University Medical school professor in Seoul.

Laurie Zoloth, a bioethics professor at Northwestern University near Chicago, said the impact of Thursday's findings would leave a lasting mark on scientific research.

"It seems clearly to have been a deliberate fabrication from the very beginning," she said. "It is a sad day for science." *Reuters*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, December 30, 2005
Holy Family

1st Reading: Sir 3:2-6,12-14
2nd Reading: Col 3:12-21
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40 or 2:22,39-40

When the day came for the purification according to the law of Moses, they brought the baby up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every firstborn male shall be consecrated to God. And they offered a sacrifice as ordered in the law of the Lord: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

There lived in Jerusalem at this time a very upright and devout man named Simeon; the Holy Spirit was in him. He looked forward to the time when the Lord would comfort Israel, and he had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before seeing the Messiah of the Lord. So he was led into the Temple by the Holy Spirit at the time the parents brought the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law.

Simeon took the child in his arms and blessed God, saying,

"Now, O Lord, you can dismiss
your servant in peace,
for you have fulfilled your word
and my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you display for all the people to see.
Here is the light you will reveal to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel."

His father and mother wondered at what was said about the child. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "See him; he will be for the rise or fall of the multitudes of Israel. He shall stand as a sign of contradiction, while a sword will pierce your own soul. Then the secret thoughts of many may be brought to light."

There was also a prophetess named Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. After leaving her father's home, she had been seven years with her husband, and since then she had been continually about the Temple, serving God as a widow night and day in fasting and prayer. She was now 84. Coming up at that time, she gave praise to God and spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When the parents had fulfilled all that was required by the law of the Lord, they returned to their town, Nazareth in Galilee. There the child grew in stature and strength and was filled with wisdom: the grace of God was upon him.

Commentary

This is the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Simeon and Anna—all those who are kin in the Spirit, those called the anawim, the poor ones who live on hope and wait for the coming of God's power into the world. They are faithful and enduring, attentive and prayerful. They fulfill the law and yet live on the Spirit. And the model is Jesus himself who grows in stature and strength with wisdom and grace—through obedience to the law and Scriptures. How are we growing? In wisdom and grace, kin to all those who obey the will of God for life for all? Have we learned to recognize those who are born in grace and dwell together in the family of God?

Blizzards bring travel disorder to Europe

PARIS—EUROPE SHIVERED Wednesday in the grip of an icy cold snap, with France hardest hit by blizzards that have cut rail and road links and left thousands of motorists stranded in sub-zero temperatures.

Snowstorms caused hundreds of train cancellations in Britain and flight disruptions in Germany, Sweden and Portugal, as well as bringing road chaos to Italy, Austria and the Czech Republic.

Worst hit was northeastern France, where 5,000 to 10,000 people spent a chilly night behind the wheel after traffic ground to a halt on a stretch of motorway between the towns of Toul and Nancy, regional authorities said.

Emergency services were called in to provide them with food and drink for the night, and nearby sports centers and town halls were opened up to provide makeshift shelter.

Traffic gradually resumed on Wednesday, though hampered by ice and snow.

In the northwestern Manche department, 300 to 400 people were taken into shelters for the night, after deep snow caused a string of truck accidents that left the road logjammed and blocked access for snow-clearance workers.

All high-speed train services between Paris, Lyon, Marseilles and Montpellier were suffering delays of one to two hours after drivers were ordered to cut their speed for safety reasons—but there were no cancellations.

Below-freezing conditions have gripped northern Europe for several days, with nighttime temperatures falling as low as minus 15 Celsius in places.

French weather experts warned drivers to be on alert for snow and icy road conditions across a broad swathe of the country's northwest, east and center.

Eighty of France's 100 departments have opened extra shelters for homeless people, and five have mobilized special teams of social workers to help protect the homeless from the cold.

Snowfall in the eastern half of England forced hundreds of trains to be cancelled, spelling hassle for Britons traveling into work on the first day after the Christmas break.

Sports fixtures were disrupted with several football matches and horse races called off, and forecasters predicted up to 25 cm of snow could fall in eastern Scotland and northeast England overnight.

In Germany, flights were delayed by up to 30 minutes out of Frankfurt and Stuttgart airports, as the country lay blanketed almost entirely in white, with more heavy snowfall expected in the coming days. *AFP*

Terror detainee challenges Bush's 'unchecked' powers

WASHINGTON—LAWYERS FOR an American 'war on terror' detainee said Wednesday they had petitioned the Supreme Court to examine the US president's powers, citing "the danger of an unchecked Executive Branch." In a filing on Tuesday, lawyers for terror suspect Jose Padilla cited evasive government moves to avoid a high court examination of his case as reason for requesting a "certiorari" review of a lower court decision challenging the president's wartime powers.

"The government's actions highlight the need for this court to grant certiorari to preserve the vital checks and balances" implicit in the US Constitution, the petition said.

Referring to a series of "strategic maneuvers" to keep Padilla's case from being heard in court, the petition said the government's actions "highlight the danger of an unchecked Executive Branch."

Padilla's detention "raises questions of profound constitutional importance about the government's military power over citizens in the homeland," the petition said.

The petition comes as there are growing questions about President George W. Bush's use of executive war powers to authorize certain treatments of detainees—allegedly including torture—and surveillance of US citizens without court orders.

Padilla, a US citizen who converted to Islam, was arrested in May 2002 after returning from Pakistan and has been detained without trial ever since in a military prison as an "enemy combatant." In September his lawyers petitioned the Supreme Court to review the government's powers to detain him without charge or trial.

In response, the government moved to transfer Padilla to civilian custody for trial.

Arguing the government's case, lawyer Gen. Alberto Gonzales declared that there was no longer any reason for a Supreme Court hearing, because Padilla himself asked to be freed from military custody to be charged and tried.

Nevertheless, on Dec. 21 a Virginia appeals court rejected Padilla's transfer, questioning the government's tactics as appearing to be an attempt to avoid SC scrutiny.

That ruling led to Tuesday's petition for a broader hearing on the president's wartime powers to detain US citizens. Padilla's lawyers point out in their petition that the government has changed the basis for holding him several times. *AFP*

SURVIVOR
A statue of the Virgin Mary stands in front of a home that was completely destroyed in Mustang, Oklahoma, on Dec 28. Grass fires swept through the area Tuesday afternoon. AP

Iraq rebels threaten to kill French hostage

DUBAI—AN IRAQI REBEL GROUP ON Wednesday claimed the kidnapping of French engineer Bernard Planche, threatening to kill him if France did not "end its illegitimate presence in Iraq" in a video broadcast by Al-Arabiya television.

The group, calling itself the Battalion of the Look-out for Iraq, claimed the kidnapping and "threatened to kill him if France does not end its illegitimate presence in Iraq," said the channel's presenter.

The Dubai-based channel showed a black-and-white video bearing the group's logo and showing a man with a moustache on his knees and wearing a dark polo shirt with two gunmen stood behind him.

His hands appeared to be secured behind his back.

"My name is Bernard, I'm 52 years old. I'm French, from Lyons," the man said in English, looking down, apparently reading from a text.

"I have worked in the humanitarian sphere as an hydraulic engineer for two years," said a translation of his words read by Al-Arabiya.

"I'm sorry for the problems I have caused for those who tried to help me. Thanks to all those who want to help me. I thank my family and offer them my apologies for the problems I have caused them," the translation continued.

Planche was seized on Dec. 5 from his home in an upmarket Baghdad neighborhood. *AFP*

Beslan massacre 'could have been prevented'

MOSCOW—THE BESLAN SCHOOL hostage massacre last year could have been averted if local law enforcement had obeyed orders to tighten security, a top investigator said Wednesday, as victims' relatives demanded senior officials be held accountable.

"If orders had been followed, the terrorist act could have been prevented," Alexander Torshin, head of the Russian parliamentary inquiry into the tragedy, told lawmakers as he outlined preliminary conclusions from the investigation.

Local "authorities showed indifference and negligence in carrying out operations to prevent terrorist acts," said Torshin, who is deputy speaker of the parliament's upper house.

Torshin also acknowledged deficiencies in authorities' handling of the crisis, saying the "list of failures and shortcomings is long," a fact which showed that "the current system of counterterrorism measures... is not sufficiently effective."

The crisis erupted when a group of guerrillas supporting the Chechen rebel cause seized a school in Beslan, close to the border with war-torn Chechnya, taking more than 1,000 children, parents and teachers hostage.

The standoff ended in chaos and bloodshed three days later after a fierce firefight between security forces and dozens of hostage-takers killed 331 people including 186 children.

Police in the southern Russian province of North Ossetia, where Beslan is located, ignored federal interior ministry orders to tighten security around schools ahead of Sept. 1 for the start of the academic year, Torshin said.

The former FSB security service head for North Ossetia, Valery Andreyev, who headed a center handling the Sept. 1-3 crisis, was also "responsible for weak coordination" of Russian forces during the siege, Torshin added.

Andreyev was sacked within weeks of the tragedy but victims' relatives say other senior officials responsible for what they consider incompetence and the excessive use of force remain in charge. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

3 Britons kidnapped in Gaza

GAZA CITY—Three members of a British family Wednesday became the latest foreigners to be kidnapped in Gaza after being abducted near the Egyptian border, diplomatic and Palestinian security sources said. Witnesses said a group of gunmen snatched a woman, her father and mother, and bundled them into a white Mercedes near the border with Egypt. A spokesperson for the British consulate in east Jerusalem confirmed the kidnappings but without releasing the trio's identities. However a spokesperson for a group called the Al-Mazen human rights center named the daughter as Kate Burton, 24, from Scotland, saying she worked for them. "We lost contact with her today," the spokesperson told the British Sky News television network. The spokesperson said, "we're not involved in politics, we're just a human rights organization." *AFP*

9 die in failed Iraq jailbreak

BAGHDAD—At least nine prisoners and guards were killed in a gun battle at an Iraqi high-security jail on Wednesday after detained guerrilla suspects, some of them foreign, grabbed weapons and tried to flee, officials said. One inmate snatched a Kalashnikov rifle from a guard as a handful of high-risk prisoners were taken out at dawn to clean the yard, a guard from the Baghdad prison told Reuters. After raiding the prison armory, the group freed more comrades but US and Iraqi troops based around the jail quelled the revolt. Five staff and four inmates were killed and five prisoners and a US soldier were wounded, the US military said, denying assertions by police that at least 20 detainees, who include some of the most violent of Iraq's insurgents, died. A Russian, a Tunisian and a Saudi were involved, officials said. *Reuters*

Ex-Enron exec pleads guilty

HOUSTON, Texas—Former Enron chief accountant Richard Causey pleaded guilty Wednesday to a criminal charge related to the financial collapse of the energy company. The plea deal he negotiated with federal prosecutors could have a major impact on the case against his bosses, former chair Kenneth Lay and former president Jeffrey Skilling. Causey had been charged with more than 30 criminal counts but reached an agreement with prosecutors to plead guilty to just one count of securities fraud and to forfeit $1.25 million in a Wachovia account he shares with his wife. He will now serve no more than seven years in jail and if prosecutors are satisfied with his level of cooperation they said they would ask the judge to reduce that sentence to five years in jail. *AFP*

Accused Nazi ordered deported

CLEVELAND—A US judge ruled on Wednesday that John Demjanjuk, once wrongly convicted of being the sadistic Nazi death camp guard "Ivan the Terrible," should be deported to his native Ukraine for his Nazi past. Chief US Immigration Judge Michael Creppy's decision that Demjanjuk was unlikely to face persecution in Ukraine followed a ruling three years ago that he had been a "willing" participant with the Nazis, "dedicated to exploiting and exterminating" Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland. Demjanjuk, a retired auto worker who has fought to keep his US citizenship for 30 years, can appeal the deportation order to the Board of Immigration Appeals within 30 days. He had argued he could be prosecuted or face torture if he were sent back to Ukraine—or Germany or Poland if Ukraine refuses to accept him. *Reuters*

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Israel bombards Gaza security zone

GAZA CITY—ISRAELI ARTILLERY BATTERies bombarded the northern Gaza Strip on Wednesday after a deadline expired for Palestinians to evacuate a new security zone which is intended to stop rocket attacks.

Israel's unilateral decision to impose a "no-go zone" in the far north of the Palestinian territory comes as part of a concerted drive to thwart repeated militant rocket attacks launched from northern Gaza into southern Israel.

An army spokesperson confirmed troops had opened fire in open fields in the "no-go zone" after a missile was fired from the area shortly before the 1600 GMT deadline came into effect.

"It's in direct response to that," said the spokesperson, describing the artillery fire as "slightly larger scale" than previous bouts of firing. A Palestinian militant, aged 25, was lightly wounded in the evening by Israeli shelling as he was preparing to fire a rocket from the security zone and was taken to a nearby hospital, medical sources said.

The Israeli military earlier airdropped leaflets over Gaza, written in Arabic with an accompanying map indicating the extent of the zone, warning Palestinians to keep out of the area or else endanger their lives.

The confines of the security area mainly incorporate an uninhabited area where three Jewish settlements stood, before Israel withdrew all soldiers and settlers from the Gaza Strip in September after a 38-year occupation.

"The army is prepared to wage intensive operations in the north of the Gaza Strip against terrorist elements who fire rockets into the territory of the state of Israel," the fliers warned.

"For your security you are warned to avoid the sectors indicated on the map from 6 p.m. (1600 GMT) Dec. 28 until further notice. Those who disregard this warning will put their lives in danger," they added.

Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz ordered the application from late Monday of a decision to create the zone, taken by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas said Israel had no right to reassert control over any part of the territory, while also condemning the rocket strikes.

"Israel left the Gaza Strip and has no right to return under any pretext such as the firing of missiles which I also strongly condemn," he said. "I ask all parties to assume their responsibilities and not give pretexts to Israel."

Alongside overnight strikes on Gaza, Israeli warplanes targeted Palestinian militants near Beirut in response to a series of rocket attacks against a town in northern Israel from across the border with Lebanon. *AFP*

Alcoholism drug wins US support

WASHINGTON—US HEALTH OFFICIALS have granted conditional approval for Alkermes Inc.'s once-a-month drug to treat alcoholism in adults, when used along with counseling, the company said on Wednesday.

The drug, called Vivitrol, is an injectable form of naltrexone administered monthly to help ward off a craving for alcohol and should be available in the second quarter of 2006, according to the company.

Alkermes shares rose as much as 7 percent, in after-hours trading following the news.

Before final approval to sell the drug, formally called Vivitrex, Alkermes said it must still meet several conditions set by the Food and Drug Administration, including providing the agency additional preclinical data.

Alkermes officials told Reuters earlier this month they plan to target the more than two million persons seeking treatment each year, but could not disclose estimated sales figures.

"At launch, our focus is on those patients who are motivated to stop" drinking, Alkermes Chief Executive Officer Richard Pops told Reuters in an interview earlier this month.

"There (are) enough patients in that 2.3 million people to have an enormous medical impact." Nearly 18 million American adults are alcohol dependent or abuse alcohol, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

CIBC World Market analysts have said Vivitrex could reach peak sales of more than $500 million.

"We believe Vivitrex could become the gold standard for treatment of alcohol dependence, particularly for patients with compliance issues," they wrote in a November research note.

Naltrexone is already available in pill form to help treat alcoholics and some drug addicts, but experts have said it can be easy for addicts to slip up and miss taking their pills. It is sold generically and under the brand name Revia by Barr Pharmaceuticals Inc. unit Duramed Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Alkermes' Pops said having to take a drug once-a-month should make it easier for patients to improve. *Reuters*

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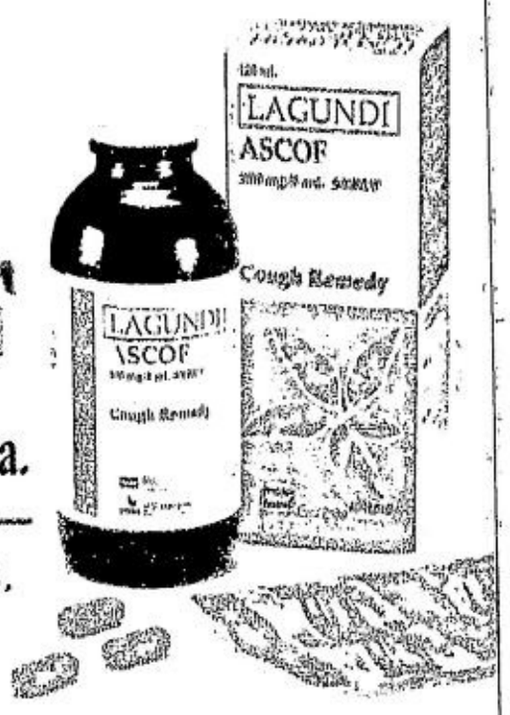

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OPINION

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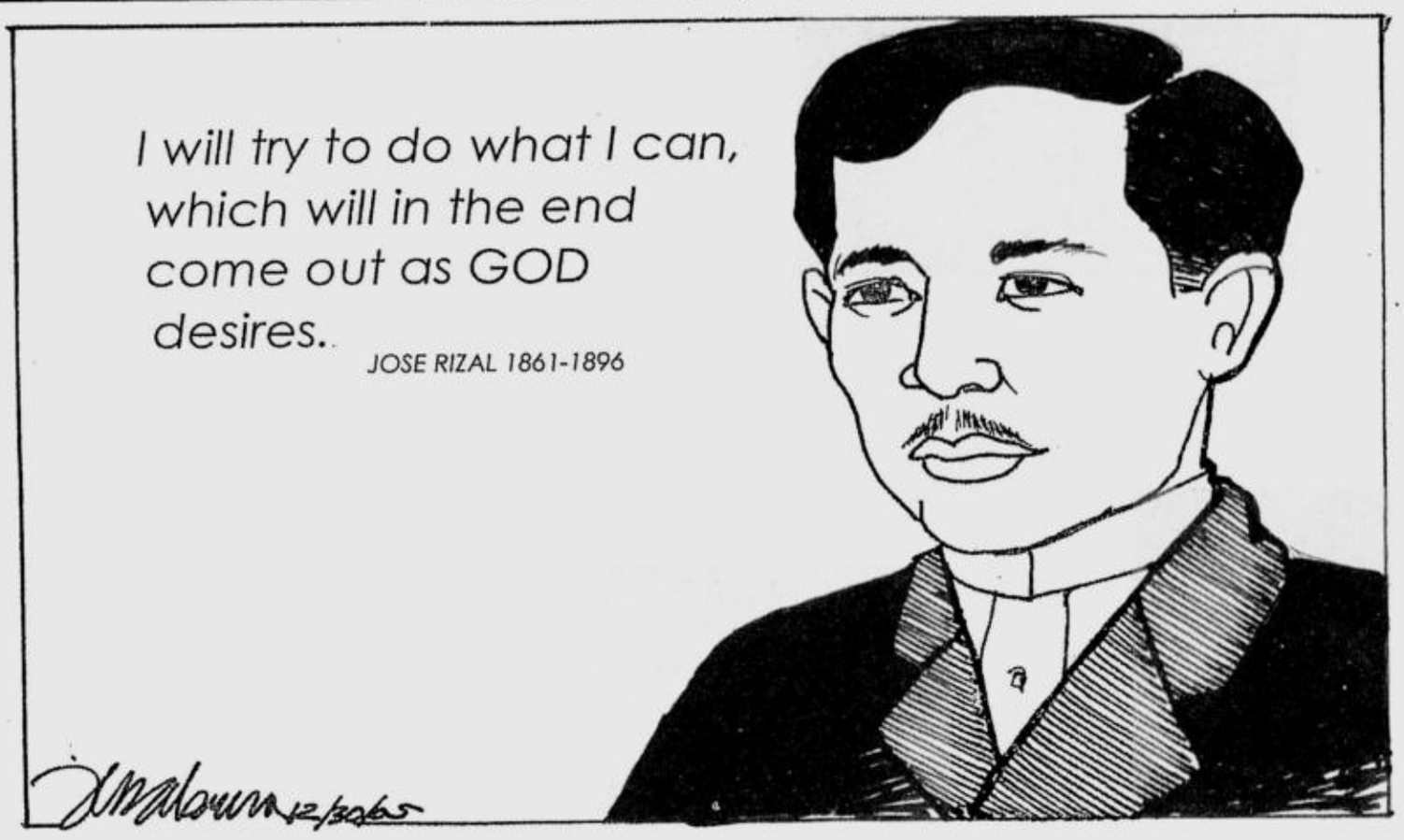

Desecration

EDITORIAL

FORTY YEARS AGO, ON RIZAL DAY, 1965, PRESIdent Diosdado Macapagal descended the stairs of Malacañang for the last time as president. There began the journey of his daughter to climb those stairs once more, not only for the sake of her own ambitions but also to vindicate her father. The ascension, premature as it was, was accomplished in 2001, but without a specific mandate. And yet in 2002, again on a Rizal Day, Macapagal's daughter seemed poised to show the statesmanship that eluded even her father, whose own initial decision to refuse to run for a second term proved changeable.

In Baguio City, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo announced she wouldn't seek election in 2004. She was, she declared, the cause of a division among the people that was unhealthy. Standing at the foot of the Rizal Monument in the City of Pines, she felt that she had to lead by demonstrating the capacity to sacrifice.

A chill wind blew down from the mountains on that day, freezing the blood of the President's party, Lakas-CMD, and suddenly magically putting the hordes of hangers-on in disrepute. Plans to inflict a constituent assembly were scrapped early in 2003, when the Senate's opposition to Charter change survived an attempt by Sen. Edgardo Angara to seize the Senate presidency from Franklin Drilon. Reform-minded supporters of the President launched the December 30 Movement to push for a non-partisan constitutional convention in 2004.

By May of 2003, however, we were asking, in the wake of her visit to Washington, if the President wasn't proving susceptible to the most harmful, honeyed words a politician's circle can whisper: "The country needs you. You must serve another term." It turned that just like her father, she was. And so she ran despite her pledge. It validated Sen. Claro M. Recto's thesis that the chronic weakness of Filipino politicians since 1946 was that there was no line, not even one drawn by a politician's private conscience, that a candidate would not cross. And the President, to do this day, has shown her nimble ability to cross every possible line that either the law, tradition or conscience should draw—and which a politician aspiring to be a statesman should not cross.

On the fourth anniversary of the President's historic but hollow Rizal Day declaration, the truth of what she said at that time remains true and so with the colossal loss to the good of the country represented by her not pursuing the political Spring that announcement should have heralded. Revisiting her words can only make citizens ache with longing for a country that could have been, a change that never was.

Said the President: "In view of all these factors, I have decided not to run for president during the elections of 2004. If I were to run, it would require a major political effort on my part. But since I am among the principal figures in the divisive national events of the last two or three years, my political efforts can only result in never ending divisiveness. On the other hand, relieved of the burden of politics, I can devote the last year and a half of my administration to the following: First, strengthening the economy, to create more jobs, and to encourage business activity that is unhampered by corruption and red tape in government. Second, healing the deep divisions within our society. Third, working for clean and honest elections in 2004."

Not one of these things was achieved, nor has a single one of the problems she identified then gone away, including her central role in dividing the nation. These words have not only continued to haunt the President, they continue to haunt the country. They will always be a reproach to her—so near, yet so far, to principled leadership!—and an indictment, as well, to a country fallen victim to the costs of ambition.

Rizal clearly saw the situation of the country in his time, and even in future times. Possessed of heroic virtues, he never asked more of his countrymen than the living out of the simple, everyday virtues. And yet, surely he knew that his heroism would serve as an incentive to at least attempt to approximate his sacrifice in generations to come. Few presidents have come so close to becoming statesmen—only to walk as far away from that point as possible, as Ms Arroyo has done.

How to survive New Year's Eve

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS ON HOW TO SURVIVE tomorrow's New Year's Eve merrymaking:

• First of all, refrain from exploding firecrackers

• If you want to create noise to "drive away the old year," bang on pots, pans and cans, blow on paper horns (they're much cheaper than firecrackers and can be used over and over), toot your car horns, etc.

• If you can't resist lighting pyrotechnic devices, limit yourself to the "luces" and sparklers. Avoid the big ones. Quality control of local manufacturers is not so good and some fireworks—"fountain," "rocket," etc.—sometimes explode. Some rockets explode before they leave the ground or fall back to earth before exploding. Stay well away from the fireworks after lighting them.

• If you have to explode firecrackers, limit yourself to the "triangulo"—the small one, not the "Five-Star" which is bigger and more powerful and can mutilate your fingers if it explodes in your hand. Avoid the bigger ones: "bawang," "thunder," "super lolo," "whistle bomb," "pla-pla," etc. They're strong enough to severe your fingers, or even your hand, or blind you or make you deaf if one explodes near your face. Besides, they're supposed to be illegal, and I don't understand why the police and local governments allow their manufacture and sale.

• Don't light pyrotechnic devices near combustible materials or near houses with *nipa* or *cogon* roofs. A burning ember can fall on the roof and set it on fire.

• If you just have to light fireworks or else your New Year's Eve won't be complete, buy only the safe ones. Enchanted Kingdom is selling inexpensive packages imported from China that contain a variety of fireworks. They're beautiful, as its Spectaccolo Pyroteknico fireworks show demonstrates. And safe.

• If you can help it, stay indoors. There are many gun-crazy people who fire their guns into the air on New Year's Eve and one of the bullets may fall on you. Every year, there is always somebody who is hit by stray bullets. This year, it could be you.

And don't believe the government propaganda of taping the muzzles of the service firearms of policemen and soldiers to prevent them from being fired. A policeman with an itchy finger can always remove the tape, fire the gun, and put the tape back on, seeing to it that the signature on it is not askew. Besides, many of the gun crazies are not cops or servicemen but private owners who just want to show off to their neighbors. There are almost as many loose firearms as licensed ones (about 500,000 for each), an indication of the failure of the police to cut down on loose firearms.

• Last but not least, don't join drinking sprees on New Year's Eve, where the participants try to out-drink the others. When the drinking begins to get out of control, leave. And don't join any arguments or debates on anything. Because of inebriation, some of these arguments get violent and end up with the protagonists stabbing one another. This has nothing to do with firecrackers, but it is even more deadly.

* * *

Which leads us again to the debate about gun ownership. The Gunless Society advocates strict limitation of the right to own and carry guns. It proposes that only uniformed law enforcement personnel be allowed to carry guns in public. Private individuals will still be allowed to own guns but they have to be kept at home.

Some ranking police officers don't agree. One said that the police lean toward allowing "responsible individuals" to carry guns. Allowing "responsible" citizens to own guns makes up for what the police lack, he said. In short, policemen want private individuals to do their job.

But there's the rub. Many of those allowed to own guns and even carry them in public are not "responsible" owners at all. How many people have been killed by guns owned by supposedly "responsible citizens"? A simple traffic altercation, or a quarrel over parking space can turn deadly because too many people are allowed to carry guns. I suppose the police had conducted the necessary investigations and concluded that the applicants were "responsible" enough to be allowed to carry guns.

Well, the police have been wrong many times. There are many individuals out there packing guns who should not be carrying them. One would think that the son and namesake of a chief justice of the Supreme Court would be "responsible" enough to carry a gun. But he shot two innocent people to death just because he met them on a street inside their own village.

Oftentimes, gun ownership in the family gives the young men of the family a reason to strut. The shoot-out between two groups of young men near Greenhills some time ago is just one example. These young men shoot at one another simply because they have guns that, if the law is enforced strictly, they should not be carrying.

When Sen. Panfilo Lacson was chief of the Philippine National Police, he was the only one who could issue a permit to carry and very few people were given that privilege. When he left the PNP, that job was given back to the Firearms and Explosives Unit, and now it is very easy to own and carry guns in public.

You will know why when you visit their office in Camp Crame. Brazenly on public display are posters from gun shops advertising all sorts of guns. For an additional fee, fixers of the shops will follow up the paper work until you get your license. Sometimes, the policemen themselves will teach you how to buy guns and get licenses for them. Indeed, almost anybody can get a license provided he has the money. Is it too far-fetched then to conclude that the policemen get commissions for every gun sold or every license issued?

Con-Com: 'It's déjà vu all over again!'

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONSULTATIVE Commission complains that we have fixated on the Transitory Provisions, and urges us instead to look at the entire draft containing substantive changes. Beware. The last time we did that, we got screwed, and suffered the pain for the next 13 years.

In January 1973, we got a new Constitution that would create a parliamentary government, yet none of it was actually implemented as intended, except for the transitory provisions that enabled Marcos to morph his dictatorship from a short-term martial law emergency to a long-term "constitutional authoritarianism."

All the fancy debates about the form of government went for naught, because in the end neither the parliament nor the prime minister ever materialized. The new Constitution emerged stillborn and only the transitory provisions were put into operation.

There is actually a word for this, made famous by Yogi Berra, legendary catcher for the New York Yankees, Hall of Fame MVP, but today better known for his malapropisms. "This is like déjà vu all over again!" he supposedly said.

Déjà vu is French for "already seen," a term created by a French psychic researcher to describe a feeling, a sense that you have already witnessed or experienced a new situation precisely as it is happening, with a sense of strangeness that the experience "genuinely happened" in the past. I describe it as living through moments that unfold like a movie you have already seen—in the words of Charles Dickens, "of knowing perfectly what will be said next, as if we suddenly remember it."

Recall that Diosdado Macapagal, former Philippine president, presided over the 1971 convention that drafted a new Constitution. We went through the whole "parliamentary v. presidential" debate, and the convention finally went for a historic shift to parliamentary government. In September 1972, just when they were about to finish their work, Marcos declared martial law. He called for a "referendum-plebiscite" in January 1973, the results of which were proclaimed in two days. (Let's just say they counted very fast in those days.)

The result was the 1973 Constitution, and Marcos proceeded to govern solely under Article VII, the "Transitory Provisions" which said that the incumbent president (namely, Marcos) would exercise the powers of both the president and prime minister until the interim National Assembly filled those offices. Marcos exercised those powers and simply never convened the National Assembly.

Not contented, in 1976, he had the Constitution amended to give him the powers of the president under the old Constitution and those of the president and prime minister under the new Constitution and, for good measure, confirmed his power to legislate.

The nation remained under the Transitory Provisions and its revisions until Marcos amended the Constitution in 1981, proclaimed a new republic, and had himself elected its new president. That should tell you how potent the transitory clauses have been in our constitutional history. One cannot belittle the neat legal device that anointed 13 dark years of servitude.

Let us not feign surprise that the 2005 draft Transitory Provisions have alarmed the public. After all, both the 1973 and the 2005 transitory clauses create virtually identical bodies with similar membership, namely, an interim parliament comprising the incumbent president, vice president, senators and congressmen. There is no space here to reproduce the clauses, but the resemblance is eerily uncanny—"separated from birth," so to speak. The 1973 drafters shamelessly also included themselves: the convention delegates automatically sat in the parliament if they voted for the transitory provisions. The 2005 drafters creditably did not, but gave GMA a free hand to fill 30 seats with her appointees and, on top of that, with one-third of her Cabinet.

The 2005 drafters have wisely reduced GMA' transitory powers, but she would still retain her commander in chief powers, including suspending the writ of *habeas corpus* and declaring martial law.

Most disappointing, however, is the "no election" clause. "The elections scheduled in 2007 shall be cancelled and the terms of office of all elective officials shall be extended to June 30, 2010 ...." Twenty-two dissenting Con-Com members have issued a Collective Position Paper calling this "an attempt to entice our national and local officials to push for the passage of the revised constitution," to lend a "favor to Congress by illegally extending [their] terms ... in the hope that they will accept our recommendations." (They were joined in the voting by their chair, Dr. Jose V. Abueva, whom I served as general counsel when he was UP president.)

Whereas Marcos had to go through legal contortions just to avoid the elections, now the Con-Com will hand it over to the incumbents on a silver platter and with noble ratiocinations to boot. Let the people decide, they say, in the hope that we will hearken our baser selves, and forget altogether that constitutions are supposed to embody the fairest hopes of our nobler selves.

There are not enough safeguards to avoid a repeat of the 1973 scenario, and portents abound that Gloria's graceful exit might turn out to be her glorious enthronement.

Yogi Berra wisely said: "Baseball is 90 percent mental, the other half is physical." I thought it right to end the year with Garci's kind of math, so long as we welcome the New Year with the ultimate Yogi-ism: "It ain't over till it's over."

I wish you all the best in this season of grace.

(Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com)

God's gift of love

HIGH BLOOD

Minyong Ordoñez

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —**Ed.**

HOW CAN AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS THRIVE in the Philippines, when our churches burst to the seams on Christmas Day and are jam-packed on all Sundays of the year?

For those who lack the imagination to conceive God, including the arrogant ones who dismiss His existence, the soil here is simply too arid and the environment demoralizing.

Most agnostics are boring and atheists are loners. In gatherings, they do not discuss their state of mind, especially not with their *inay* or *lola* lest they get pinched in the ears. (*Pilosopo kang bata ka, umm! Pasok sa kwarto! Huwag kang lalabas!*)

To agnostics and atheists, there's nothing to believe but disbelief. It's like the mind hits a dead end, an impossible scenario for Filipinos in whose veins run the charism (transcendent) of Christianity and the mysticism (magical) of Orientals. The Filipinos' sociology explain why they are prayerful and hopeful people. They are ranked on top of the list as the happiest people in the world today, as revealed by an international survey measuring the psychological state of people regardless of economic situation.

Filipinos best understand the spirit of Christmas. The Philippines is the only country on earth where Christmas is an exuberance enjoyed longer than any feast. The Simbang Gabi symbolizes the Filipino's palpable anticipation of joy on the coming birth of Jesus, extending all the way to the Epiphany, capping the season with the homage of the three Magi to Jesus as the King of kings—all in three weeks of spiritual and material awareness.

If you are a Filipino visiting Europe, the strange experience you'll encounter is the eerie feeling of empty churches in the cities. To think that it was Christianity that was mainly responsible for the creation of Europe's culture, starting at the dawn of the Middle Ages. It was Catholicism that established great universities, promoted and patronized great work of arts, built great cathedrals and buildings exemplifying architectural and engineering excellence.

Today it's thousands of Filipino expats who are filling those empty European churches, forming a congregation that resounds with prayers, songs, liturgies and worship. Perhaps the agnostics and atheists in Europe, who are aplenty, find churches filled with Filipinos an object of curiosity or derision. What they can't see are God's mysteries which are comprehensible only through faith, which Filipinos have. For Filipinos, God's love is there inside the church in actuality and continuity, which began in a cold cave in Bethlehem.

God the creator is also a superb communicator. He knows our human nature responds readily to ideas by using heart and mind. He presents His Son Jesus in Bethlehem, complete with heart-tugging drama to touch humans, even those with the hardest of hearts. For what mortal can't be moved by a babe born in a manger on a cold night because there was no room in an inn? What can be more dazzling than the star of Bethlehem casting its brilliance on the whole earth? What can be more humbling than poor shepherds as the first callers of the Son of God? What can be more awesome than three wise men kneeling before the crib paying homage to the King of kings?

Christmas is the miracle that only a religion of love can offer to mankind as fresh and appealing as it presented itself to all mankind 2,000 years ago. Again and again, the whole world celebrates Christmas as the universal symbol for peace and good will, exactly as the angels announced in Bethlehem.

"Peace on earth, good will to men." This call for universal peace and happiness is the perfect answer for man's frustration on his earthly imperfection. We needed Jesus to be born so that we can be free from the fear of the unknown. We needed an authentic and original teacher to spare us the indignity of ignorance and the absurdity of errors caused by myths and superstitions of old, and the self-destructing philosophies of bourgeoisie opulence in our modern world.

The big bullies of atheism, Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong, have long been dead and communism was a colossal failure as a godless socioeconomic philosophy, yet world peace is elusive as ever. Today our life's safety is shattered by a new evil called global terrorism, a bizarre form of war triggered by racial hatred and religious bigotry victimizing innocent people.

Our need to keep going back to the babe in Bethlehem becomes more profound as the world plunges itself into a crisis, a crisis called by the late Pope John Paul II as the "culture of death."

Contemporary technologies make big breakthroughs one after the other, causing big changes in the way people live and think. Information technology empowers people in controlling their material destinies at the risk of compromising the spiritual and moral.

The digital age reveals a resurgence of egoism, individualism, and relativism, deadly sins of the intellect and the cause of disagreement with the moral law, the law that reflects God's truth.

Is it any wonder that after God gave us the gift of life, He then gave us a gift of love, a Baby in the manger?

Babies are our instinctive and instantaneous objects of love. Filipinos know that kind of love. They can feel it and give it.

It's never too late for agnostics and atheists to receive and give love. Like humble shepherds or wise Magis, they can call on the same Jesus in Bethlehem now present in the Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharist. They are most welcome.

Minyong Ordoñez, 69, is chair of Publicis Manila.

Rizal on women

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS "STATEMENT" on Filipino womanhood in Philippine history is Jose Rizal's "Letter to the Young Women of Malolos," written in Tagalog on Feb. 22, 1889.

In his book "The Women of Malolos," Nicanor Tiongson describes Rizal's letter as "not as formally organized as his other essays but much more spontaneous and heartfelt." The letter is often used as an example of Rizal's "progressive" views on womanhood, which in the Philippines is tantamount to winning an endorsement from no less than the National Hero, though a careful reading of it would show that he was by no means a proto-feminist—or at least not yet. Still, as Tiongson points out, in his letter to the women of Malolos, Rizal was "imagining, and prescribing, a new paradigm of the Filipino woman."

It's an irony, of course, how the letter of congratulations has become much more famous than the original letter of petition that sparked the controversy.

By way of background, the women were being congratulated for their "daring" act of presenting to Governor-General Valeriano Weyler, who was then on a tour of the schools of Bulacan, a petition for the opening of a "night school" where they could study Spanish grammar—under instruction of a "Latin professor" and chaperoned by their mothers.

The "Latin professor" was Teodoro Sandico, who opened a number of primary and secondary schools in Malolos with the help of private benefactors.

* * *

ASIDE FROM RUNNING his schools, Sandico was also secretly giving lessons in Spanish to adults, specifically the 20 women from well-off and prominent Malolos families who signed the petition. The lessons were being carried out in secret because the friars and other town worthies deemed anyone who wished to learn Spanish as potential "*filibusteros*" or subversives.

The friars were also "scandalized" at the thought of married women (though a few of them were to remain single all their lives) daring to leave their homes after dark, albeit accompanied by female relatives. But as the women explained in their petition, some of them were free only in the evening "because of pressing circumstances in which they find themselves and others because their domestic duties prevent them from studying during the day," the last about the earliest acknowledgment of what feminists would later call women's "double burden."

The letter—as much as the women's "audacity"—sparked both "aspersions and accolades," as Tiongson put it. The Malolos parish priest summoned the women shortly after Weyler's departure and scolded them for acting without his consent. A pro-friar newspaper decried that this was proof that "the Philippines are going to perdition."

But Epifanio delos Santos declared that the women's daring "gave rise to a flutter of excitement in the Philippines and Spain, precipitated the publication of La Solidaridad (the main organ of the Propaganda Movement) and resulted in a debate which gave no peace to the press of both Spanish and Filipino writers."

* * *

RIGHT on the heels of numerous encomiums, among them by Graciano Lopez Jaena, Marcelo H. del Pilar asked Rizal, then in Madrid, to read Jaena's column and perhaps write a letter to the women as "this would be a great boost" to the propaganda cause.

The women of Malolos, though, were recognized not as early champions of women's rights but as comrades in the fight against frailocracy. In his letter, Rizal acknowledged that he once thought most Filipinas "tended to be servile to the wishes of the friars," but the Women of Malolos convinced him that "there now existed women who understood that religiousness was not to be equated with 'endless prayers, big rosaries and grimy scapularies' but with 'spotless conduct, firm intention and upright judgment; and that prudence is not blind acquiescence to the friar but obeying only that which is reasonable and just.'"

Rizal also sought to debunk myths on motherhood perpetrated by the friars who hoped to keep their control of a compliant populace through the women. A "good mother," Rizal wrote, was not one created by the friars, but rather one "who brought up her children in the image of the true God, one who 'awakens and prepares the will of her children toward clear procedure, honesty in act and deed, love for their fellowman and respect for God.'"

* * *

RIZAL was "firm in his belief that no honor or prosperity could come if children were raised by mothers who were slavish and ignorant," claiming that Asia was backward because its women "are ignorant, are slaves; while Europe and America are powerful because there the women are free and well-educated."

It was his dream as well as that of his compatriots, said Rizal, that the Filipino woman would be loved "not only because of her beauty and her amiable character, but also on account of her fortitude of mind and loftiness of purpose."

Still, it was clear that Rizal saw a woman's primary role in life as being that of mother and wife. It was her life's work, he noted, to mold her beaus and husband into strong, courageous and honorable citizens, who would "jealously guard their honor, love their fellowmen and their native land, and do their duty."

As for raising sons, Filipinas, he said, should emulate the mothers of Sparta, for whom victory in the battlefield in behalf of the mother land was all important, even if it resulted in the deaths of their sons.

Though an admirer of women's strength of character and determination, to which he had been exposed all his life because of the strong women in his own family, Rizal was still obviously unable and unwilling to break free of his own limitations of gender and culture. This is a struggle that continues to this day, for men as well as for women.

Fort Santiago

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

MY FIRST MEMORY OF FORT SANTIAGO DATES back to my grade-school days when our teachers dumped us in the place and escaped for lunch and gossip. Left to fend for ourselves, we hurriedly ate our pack lunches and explored the place. We were not given any historical background before or during the field trip, so we walked aimlessly about, and that is probably why the trip is memorable.

We did not need a history lesson to know the place was old; we could see that. Fort Santiago was simply a teaching aid that was bigger than life, allowing us to experience the interiors of the musty presidential limousines then displayed in one of the vaulted structures. We watched couples making out in the bushes, and last but not least, we visited the Rizal Shrine, where the national hero was imprisoned before his execution in Bagumbayan on Dec. 30, 1896.

It was here where I met my first Rizalista. My students write papers on them today, they are the subject of academic study and doctoral dissertations, but meeting a Rizalista as a child has its own charm. A classmate and I saw an old man praying outside Rizal's cell. We peeked behind his back and saw Rizal's wax likeness, frozen in time, writing what everyone presumes is his "Ultimo Adios" with a quill. (Quills were not used in Rizal's time; he used a metal-tipped pen. Quills were passe for over a century before Rizal's time, but heck its part of Rizal iconography now. Just look at all those monuments showing him holding a quill.)

There was another anachronism there. The old man turned to us, pointed to the ceiling and asked the great philosophical question, "*Bakit may ventilador sa selda ni Rizal?*" Then as now, I was critical and answered that there were no electric fans in Rizal's time.

Not satisfied with my commonsense answer, the man repeated the question, and my classmate, Kenneth Ferrer (now deceased), provided an alternative answer, "*Siguro naiinitan!*"

To my surprise, the man did not get upset with this smart-ass answer and even followed up his question with another, "*Bakit naiinitan?*" My classmate replied, "*Naka-Americana kasi.*"

I was dumbfounded, but more was to come as the old man explained that Rizal needed the fan because he was alive. Our hero was actually living in quiet retirement on Mt. Banahaw. I tugged my friend's shirt and prepared to run away, but stayed a while longer when the man flashed the numerous laminated photographs of Rizal hanging by a string around his neck. Of these pictures, one is imprinted in my memory: that of Rizal standing in the clouds holding two books and in the fond embrace of a severe old man with a beard, Jesus Christ carrying a cross watches on the side, and the Holy Spirit, as a dove, spreading rays of light over everyone.

Wow! Rizal and the Holy Trinity. Then came the prophecy: Rizal savior of the Philippines will return at the end of time, when seven moons appear in the heavens and cover the face of the earth with red light. Then seven suns will rise to dispel the darkness and signal the coming of a new age.

Forty years later, I'm still waiting for all this to happen.

I would return to Fort Santiago when I was in college. The late Doreen Fernandez introduced us to Peta performances in the open-air Rajah Sulayman Theater near the Rizal Shrine. It was then that I realized that Fort Santiago was literally built over Soliman's palisades, when the Spaniards took over in the 16th-century and drove the valiant Filipinos across the Pasig and made them vassals in their own land. No wonder some rabid UP professors once proposed that an archaeological survey be conducted here to find the remains of Soliman's city: Maynila (not May nilad).

It was a good idea and an attempt to rewrite history from a Filipino viewpoint, pushing knowledge past the founding of Spanish Manila to an earlier time. The underside to this was that Fort Santiago would be sacrificed to find something that might not even be there. So much for the rewriting of Philippine history.

Excavations were undertaken in the Fort in the mid-1980s not so much to find Soliman's palisades but in the hopes of finding Yamashita's fabled treasure. To date there has been no official report on those diggings in Fort Santiago. All we are told is that the extensive excavation weakened the foundations of the building behind the Rizal Shrine and Rajah Sulayman Theater that has been closed to visitors since.

An article in the December 1932 issue of the Philippine Magazine by Martha Oliver Daugherty tells us about "The romance of Living in Old Fort Santiago." She was one of the family members of the 13 young American officers who lived there at the time and she described both the romance of history and the everyday concerns (and fears) of living in the Fort.

She wasn't worried about the ghost of Spanish Governor General Bustamante who had been murdered by a mob led by friars. She was more scared of the snakes in their homes, which were tolerated because they fed on rats and other household rodents. She described the old walls and tunnels, the famous gate and the irritating chatter of magpies on the almond trees. She retold stories about water dungeons that drowned prisoners when the tide was high.

All the stories about Fort Santiago were already current in 1932. When do we start to separate fact from fiction?

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Generations

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

IT ALL STARTED A FEW WEEKS AGO, WHEN MY FATHER was about to embark on an extended trip to Shanghai and wanted to make sure he could follow local news.

"Can you tell me how to get the INQUIRER while I'm there?" he asked. Yup, my father's smart. He knew better than to ask if I could teach him how to get the one of the other, lesser papers.

High-speed Shanghai

Given the short notice I had, I gave my father the web address for the INQUIRER and told him to ask my Auntie Lily in Shanghai to help set him up.

Now my Auntie Lily's something else. She's in her 60s and has seen China through World War II, Liberation, the Cultural Revolution, and now, the era of modernization.

Technology doesn't intimidate her—she once drove a tractor in a commune. The first time I visited her several years ago, I told her I needed Internet access so I could send my INQUIRER columns. Without asking any questions, she wrote out on a slip of paper her user name and password so I could access the Internet through her service provider, and on her computer.

Since then, each time I'd visit, she'd show me a new component to her computer. A few months back, as I walked into her apartment, she had that excited gleam in her eyes and I thought she had another new gadget. I was sort of right, but this time, her new pride and joy was high-speed Internet.

I knew my father would manage with Auntie Lily around. He did keep in touch the usual Pinoy (or Tsinoy) way, with lots of text messages about the weather, about news he'd read in the INQUIRER.

But lo and behold, one day, I got an e-mail message from him. He was using Auntie Lily's e-mail! It was almost as short as a text message but I could imagine why: my father is a two-finger typist.

He attempted another e-mail message after that, but pretty much kept to texting. Then before I knew it, he was home, with a new request, "Can you help me get Chinese newspapers while I'm here?"

Okay, I'll be honest and admit I first sighed and groaned, but then I figured, why not set him up for the Internet? My father, a recent reluctant retiree, has been having problems adjusting. The Internet would be good, I thought.

My father had learned to do dial-up connections in Shanghai, but I still thought it was better to have him on high-speed Internet, mainly because elderly people aren't exactly the most patient in the world. I had an extra laptop, so I had it configured to make it as easy to use as possible before we finally sat down to go through the steps, one by one.

It turned out to be more of a review for him. I'd say, "Click on Explorer," and he would repeat the instruction in Chinese because he had learned the basics on a Chinese computer.

"Yes, correct," I'd reply to reinforce him, but sometimes we'd get something unexpected on the screen and he would go, "No, no, that wasn't what I got in China." I'd figure out what went wrong while his cat Dandan watched by the side with feigned detachment.

Search engines

I configured the computer so that the minute he entered the Internet he'd go on Yahoo. I chose Yahoo because it's fairly easy to use and because I'd gotten him an e-mail address there. I then explained what Yahoo was: a search engine that could help you look up information. He knows too about Google and the other alternatives.

Within a few days, he had information on a range of cell phones and digital cameras, including specifications and prices. Typically, he'd start out by reading about some new model in the papers and then go into the Internet to get more information. It's been wonderful, mainly because on the Internet, he's been able to go beyond the advertising hype. So far, the Internet's actually made him change his mind about buying a new phone and camera because he hasn't found anything worthwhile.

Generativity

The Internet has given my father new rituals. Each morning now, he does 5 kilometers on the stationary bike, and then moves to a corner of the living room where he switches on the laptop and engages the world. He reads through at least six Chinese papers on the Internet. The INQUIRER and local Chinese papers, I'm pleased to report, he still prefers to read the old-fashioned way.

My father hasn't caught on yet to e-mail, mainly because there aren't too many people his age to correspond with. One of my mother's best friends, Tita Hilda Presbiterio, lives in the United States and loves to e-mail, but then my mother, never quite domesticated, can't bring herself to sit in front of a computer.

With time though, the Internet and e-mail will draw in more elderly people. I'm on an alternative economics electronic group that's managed by an 85-year-old retired American professor, living in a nursing home with his wife. In between scathing critiques of Bush's policies, he writes about one of his many chronic battles with assorted ailments, as well as his latest trips, the last one to Mexico.

Back in the 1970s, the psychologist Erik Erikson wrote about how, in middle adulthood, we strive for generativity, learning to care for the next generation. In the context of the 21st century, I think generativity needs to be redefined as caring for different generations. With life expectancies lengthening, many of us now find ourselves part of a sandwich generation, caring for the young and the elderly.

Technologies help, but I'd be careful there. It's always tempting to put children and the elderly in front of the television and forget about them. The Internet offers an alternative, thought it is not without its hazards: I've had to warn my father about eye strain as well as company-sponsored websites and scam artists and swindlers.

Fortunately, my father isn't into shopping, in malls or on the Internet. He's found better uses for the Internet, the other day stumbling on a website (etext.lib.virginia.edu/Chinese/frame.htm) where 300 poems dating back to the Tang dynasty (7th to 10th centuries AD) are stored, in the original Chinese together with English translations.

With visible emotion, he showed me the website and read his favorites poems. Well, reading out probably is a misnomer. I knew he had memorized many of these poems way back when he was in high school, but seeing the verses on a computer screen gives the poems new life in their descriptions of the mountains and the moon, of friendships and homecomings.

Generativity is more than caring for the young; it's building the interconnections across generations. The Internet certainly offers new exciting possibilities for this generativity, building bridges even across time like that website of Tang poems, but we shouldn't forget, too, the more traditional "old-fashioned" ways, of storytelling around dinner, a weekend outing, or a family reunion to welcome the new year.

Chief justice should be chosen by SC members

HOW COME THE JUDICIAL TRADITION of appointing the most senior member of the Supreme Court as Chief Justice was set aside? Associate Justice Reynato Puno should have been the one appointed Chief Justice, he being the most senior and, undoubtedly, the most qualified.

It seems that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Justice Artemio Panganiban Chief Justice, based solely on "self-preservation." With her presidency besieged by a protracted political crisis, she needs somebody in the judiciary whom she can "trust." I am saddened by the fact that the integrity of the Supreme Court has been put in bad light by GMA's political maneuverings. GMA is at her best again!

I believe that to protect the independence of the judiciary, the President should have no hand in the selection and appointment of Chief Justice. The Chief Justice should be chosen on by the members of the High Tribunal, who are undeniably in a better position to know the person best qualified to lead the judiciary. This also takes away the "*utang na loob*" that the Chief Justice may owe the President for the appointment.

I feel sorry for what has happened to the judiciary. I feel sorry for Justice Puno.

—JAN CHAVEZ, chavezjan@yahoo.com

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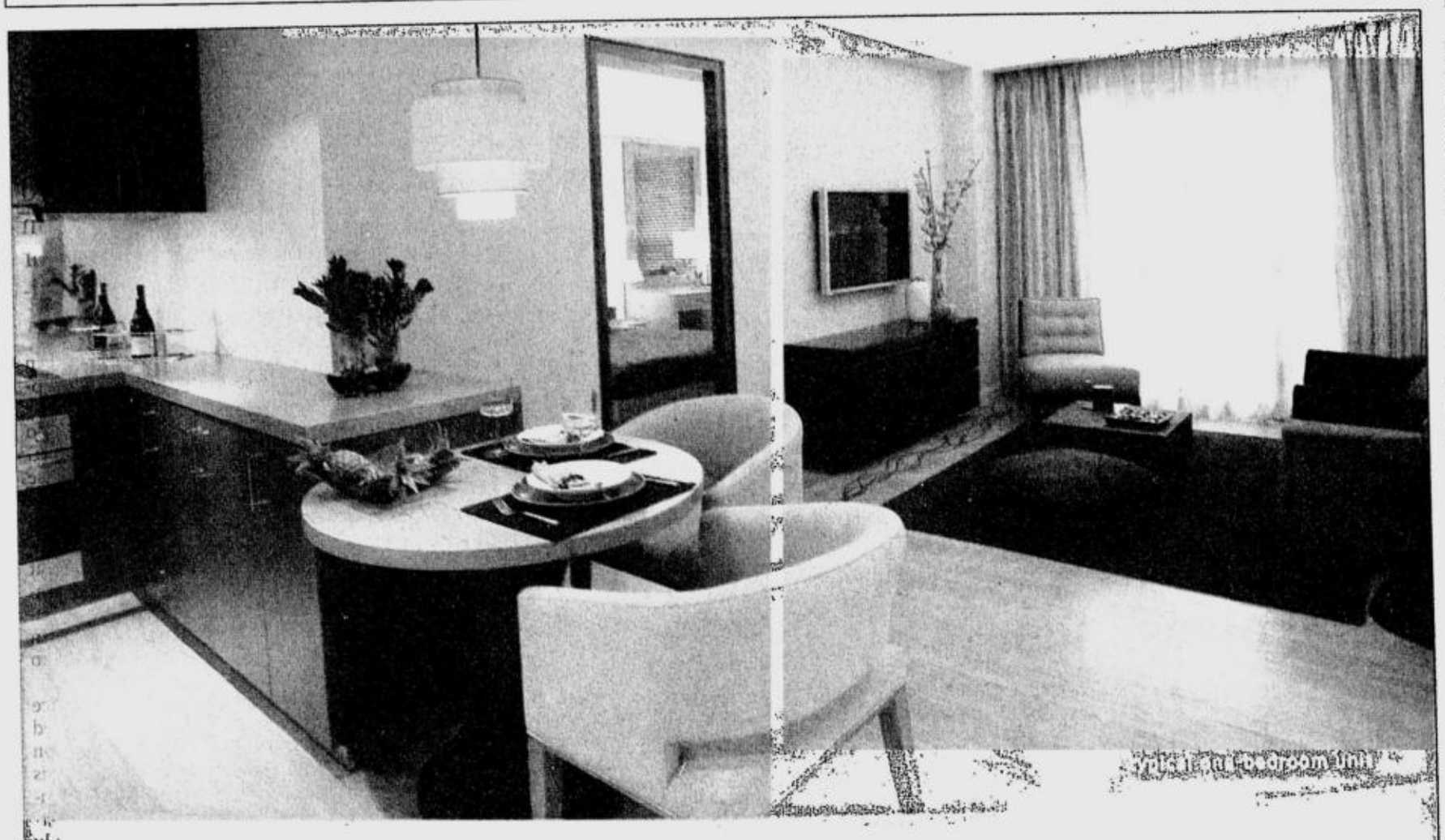

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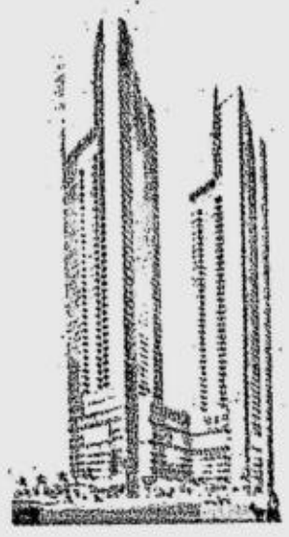

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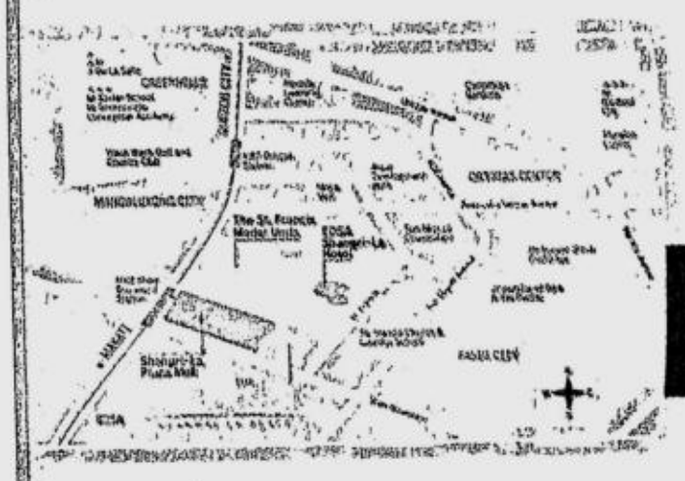

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What Estrada charisma?

"WITH HIS charisma, emotional intelligence and professed love for the masses, Estrada could have been a good president. But the tragedy is that his actions did not suit his words," thus stated INQUIRER's editorial last December 20.

Charisma? I say proficiency in lying and deceit. Emotional intelligence? I say raging hormones and the ability to satisfy these by using the people's money to get his mistresses to bed. Professed love for the masses? Yes, just professed, to get the vote of the majority.

I do not get how the INQUIRER could still say that Estrada could have been a good president. How? The INQUIRER contradicts itself in the editorial. What's worse, the editorial had the audacity to compare Bonifacio—who bled for our country and our people—with Estrada. Please. If the INQUIRER wants to bash the elite, let it do so in a logical and intelligent manner. And without disrespecting our country's heroes.

—JO ANNE DP VILLAROSA, jvillaro@bates.edu

GMA doing right on Meralco's debt

DESPITE HER PREVIOUS FUMBLES AND irrational decisions, this time, I must commend President Macapagal-Arroyo for her strong political will to go after Meralco. Her decision allowing a government takeover of the power distribution firm is correct. She must not be cowed by the possibility of a political vendetta from the Lopezes, the owners of Meralco.

The Lopezes today face two enemies—GMA and GMA Channel 7. In the past, it was Marcos who was their enemy. But there is no point for the Lopezes to compare Ms Arroyo with Marcos. There's a gulf of a difference between Marcos and GMA. The latter is made of finer, stronger stuff. She will not back down without a fight. She will go down in history as the only Philippine leader with a sense of duty to the Filipino people.

—RICHARD RIVERA, rem_rivera@yahoo.com

Conserving truth as a precious resort

WHAT THE US-BASED GROUP FREEDOM House says about the Philippines being "partly free" (PDI, 12/22/05) won't keep me from sleeping peacefully at night since I have the freedom to give my two cents' worth about the issue, and here it is: If it places our country in league with Singapore, Thailand and even China where economies have grown strong because of political and social stability, I fully support a "partly free" Philippines.

The opposition portrays President Macapagal-Arroyo as if she were as terrible as the late Ferdinand Marcos. I must say: these people have become soft. In the 1970s and early '80s, protesters were bombarded with tear gas and clobbered with night sticks; their leaders were kidnapped and tortured, never to be seen alive again. Today, the worst thing that can happen to a protester is to be shot with a fire hose or a water cannon. (The pressure may be shocking but at least he gets a free bath.)

Edsa I was justified by Marcos' cruelty. And by the way, the Marcoses did not have a monopoly on cruelty; remember the massacres at Mendiola and Luisita Hacienda. Now that the Hacienda will be handed over to the ones who toiled on it, expect the Cojuangcos—particularly its grandstanding matriarch—to have stronger sentiments for the opposition's discordant activities. Bickering seems to be an innate trait of Filipinos, evident even during the time of the Katipuneros.

If you recall, Andres Bonifacio died by the hand of his fellow Filipinos, not by the Spanish. If there were no freedom in the Philippines to reveal the truth, wouldn't the INQUIRER be shut down the way the Manila Times was shut down during the time of President Estrada?

And if truth has indeed been "watered down" by this administration, unadulterated truth should nevertheless be given only to people who know how to handle it wisely and not abuse it. To paraphrase Mark Twain: "Truth is a precious resource; let us conserve it."

—GEO ALCALA, trek_wiseman@yahoo.com

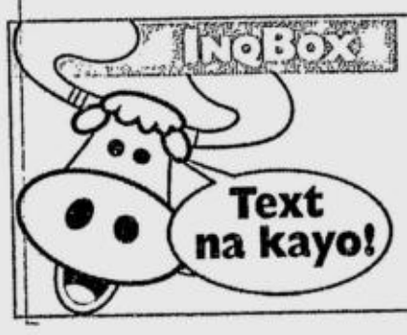
Alternative voices

I HAVE BEEN A READER OF THE INQUIRER since I was in high school. While some people denounce columnists such as Conrad de Quiros for being "too negative," I think it doesn't hurt to hear opinions other than what we would like to believe.

In fairness, though, he does write about some positive things now happening in the country (although he does criticize those who unjustly take credit for them). This is not a letter in defense of De Quiros; this is a letter in defense of alternative voices going against the official story.

It is unfair for some people to blame apathy on columnists alone. Apathy is not a product of too much negativity from the columnists; it is a direct result of too much negativity in society.

—JONAR SABILANO, jonar.sabilano@gmail.com



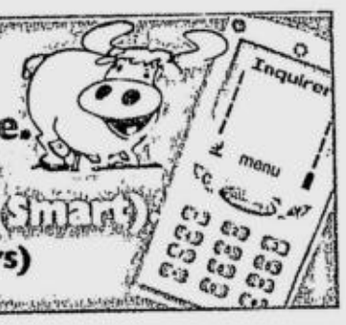
Question of the Week

As the new year begins, what's your message to the politicians?

Check out our readers' views on Tuesday's INQBOX

Key in inquirer box name/age/city/message. Text your answer to 2207 (Globe) or 2887 (Smart)

(Maximum of 160 characters)



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Coco farmers junk levy compromise

Silliman U groups seek probe of P5-M overpass

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—SEVERAL groups from Silliman University have pushed for the investigation of a P5-million pedestrian overpass being constructed in front of the university's high school and elementary school, saying it was a waste of public funds.

The overpass, located along Hibbard Avenue, is funded by a congressional fund provided by party-list Rep. Sunny Rose Madamba of the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives.

In a joint resolution, the Silliman University Alumni Association Inc. (SAAI), the Parents Teachers Association, Silliman Elementary School (PTA-SES) and Student Government of the school and four other organizations have requested the Commission on Audit, Congress and the Ombudsman to look into the project, claiming it does not serve any public purpose.

The complaining groups, that also included the Silliman-based Chapel of the Evangel Fellowship, the Peace Resource Center and the Divinity School and the Friends of Banica, also complained why a portion of the overpass was constructed on university property.

Engineer Rodrigo Catapusan, officer in charge of the Department of Public Works and Highways-2nd Engineering District based in this city, however said the allegations against the project were untrue. The DPWH-2nd Engineering District is implementing the project through contractor HLJ Construction and Enterprise.

Assuming that the project would affect a small portion of the property of Silliman, Catapusan claimed it was with the consent of SU's administration.

Catapusan said the overpass, which was constructed in September and set for completion in February 2006, was meant to solve the traffic congestion in front of SU's high school and elementary departments.

But in separate resolutions opposing the project, the SAAI and PTA of SU's elementary school said they did not believe the overpass would solve the traffic problem.

The SAAI, which described the project as a "wasteful expenditure of public funds," said vehicles would be parking longer than before because it would take more time for the children to go up the stairs of the overpass than the five seconds it would take for them to simply cross the street.

The PTA also said the design was not child-friendly, noting among others that it did not have a ramp for heavy school bags to roll on.

Both groups also assailed the proponent of the project for lack of consultation.

RED RITES MA KRISTINA E. CASSION/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU
NPA fighters in Mindanao take time out from combat to display their theatrical skills during the 37th founding anniversary celebration of the CPP in Lianga, Surigao del Sur.

Groups say PCGG chief showing 'true colors'

By PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—AN ALLIANCE OF GROUPS of small coconut farmers in the Visayas has called for the resignation of Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) chair Camilo Sabio for saying he was open to a compromise with businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Herminio D. La Viña, spokesperson of the Alyansa sa mga Mag-uuma ug Mamomoo sa Lubi (Alyansa Lubi)-Visayas or the alliance of coconut farmers and workers, said Sabio was "completely reversing the spirit and the legacy of his predecessor, Haydee Yorac" who had aggressively worked in favor of the small coconut farmers.

La Viña said Sabio showed his "true color" when he said that the PCGG was open for a compromise agreement between the nation's coconut farmers and Cojuangco, the chair of the food giant San Miguel Corp., over the disputed coconut levy fund.

What Sabio should have done, La Viña added, was to support the cause of the coconut farmer-claimants especially with the earlier ruling of the Supreme Court declaring the coco levy funds as public funds.

He added that the Sandiganbayan also ruled on May 7, 2004 that the 27 percent shares of stocks owned by the Coconut Industry Investment Fund in San Miguel Corp. amounting to some P50 billion is owned by the government, "held in trust" for the benefit of the small coconut farmers.

La Viña said the Office of the Solicitor General has filed a motion for the execution of the Sandiganbayan's judgment with the graft court on Aug. 9, 2005, which Sabio should support.

"We are already winning in that case why should we compromise?" La Viña asked.

La Viña said that even if Sabio had been saying that the PCGG would only favor a compromise agreement if the farmers would agree to it, his action said otherwise.

La Viña and leaders of peasant groups supporting the Alyansa-Lubi claimed the PCGG was actually conducting consultations in Central Visayas supposedly to discuss a possible compromise.

"Despite the fact that the Office of the Solicitor General had filed motions for a Writ of Execution last Aug. 9, the same group is now peddling through mock consultations in Visayas and projecting that coco levy cases can only be decided with finality in a compromise i. e. out of court settlement," a statement by Alyansa Lubi claimed.

Eugene Quirante, regional liaison officer of the Philippine Peasant Institute in Region VII and a council of leaders member of Alyansa Lubi, claimed the consultations were initiated by the PCGG, along with the Philippine Coconut Authority and the Bishop-Ulama-Priests-Pastors-Farmers-Lumad Conference.

"We are very disappointed with Sabio. Maybe he is not acting on his own and was being used to get the support of powerful people to ensure the survival of this administration," Quirante claimed.

Another Bayan Muna member killed in Cebu

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—TWO MOTORCYCLE-riding men shot dead a Bayan Muna member on Wednesday in front of his house in a mountain village of Tuburan town, about 87 km northwest of this city.

Allan Atillano Villacencio, 42, Bayan Muna barangay coordinator, died on the spot after he was shot in the neck, stomach and right side of the body.

Tuburan police investigator PO3 Raul Jamero said Villacencio approached the two assailants who pretended to ask where they could buy gasoline for their motorcycle.

He said their initial investigation showed that the two men arrived at a store fronting Villacencio's house in Barangay Caridad, about 7 km from the town proper of Tuburan, at about 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

One of them asked the victim's wife Myrna where they could buy gasoline as they were headed for Barangay Bacyawan, the village next to Caridad.

Jamero said Villacencio, who was sitting on a bench outside the house, stood and walked toward the store to guide the suspects where they could buy gasoline.

Myrna, who by then had just gotten inside her house, heard bursts of gunfire. She hurriedly went out of the house and saw her husband lying on a pool of blood.

Jamero said Myrna was not able see the assailants and only heard the sound of the motorcycle leaving the area.

The police recovered one empty shell and two slugs for .45 caliber pistol, he added.

Jamero said Myrna could not describe the two men because they were wearing baseball caps.

He said the police had yet to determine the motive in the killing as investigators were still gathering statements from the neighbors of the couple.

Aside from his Bayan Muna activities, Villacencio was a livestock dealer and was engaged in woodcraft business.

Bayan Muna and other militant groups have condemned the killing and accused the military of having a hand in the crime.

"We condemn this barbaric acts of state mercenaries. We are calling for justice to all victims of state of terrorism," said Arman Perez, Bayan Muna coordinator for Central Visayas.

Dennis Abarrintos of the human rights group Karapatan said they believed that soldiers were involved because how Villacencio was killed was similar to what happened to Karapatan organizer Emmylou Cruz, who was shot and wounded on Nov. 24 in Barangay Otso, about 4 km from Caridad.

Cruz was also shot by two men on board a motorcycle, he said.

Deaths of 4 prisoners in GenSan jail baffle authorities, relatives

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—AT LEAST FOUR prisoners died of mysterious circumstances here this month alone, prompting relatives to call for an investigation.

The latest was Gino Yakan, 24, and a resident of Bula village here.

Yakan died on Wednesday evening, shortly after he was rushed to the hospital.

Although the result of the medical examination has yet to be issued, jail officials said Yakan died of "complications."

The day before Yakan died, inmate Mary Jane Manzera, 33, also died while being rushed to the General Santos City Hospital.

Manzera, a resident of Darimco Silway in Dadiangas West village here, was detained last year for illegal drug use.

His live-in partner Fidel Navaza told reporters that Mary Jane appeared healthy during his visit last Sunday.

Jail officials claimed Manzera collapsed while attending the Christmas party for the inmates inside the city jail.

She was rushed to the hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

The Manzera family said they wanted Mary Jane's death investigated.

Minda Quizon, Mary Jane's mother, told reporters they noticed a wound in the left portion of her neck when they checked the body at the hospital's morgue.

Two weeks ago, prisoner Vicente Abella died while sleeping inside his prison cell at the city jail.

Jail officials claimed he died of cardiac arrest.

Earlier this month, an inmate identified as Arthur Esquelona also died while being transported by an ambulance to the hospital.

In her autopsy report, Dr. Antonietta Odi, medico legal officer of the City Health Integrated Services, claimed Esquelona died of severe head injuries.

The doctor found that the left portion of the victim's head was swelling.

This, Odi said, could have been the cause of the victim's death contrary to claims by jail officials that the prisoner was suffering from stomach ulcer. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

AN URGENT APPEAL TO PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

Madame President, we are directly appealing to you for your sense of justice and fairness to mandate the concerned officers of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority to follow the rule of law.

Last December 16, 2005, the Olongapo City Regional Trial Court, Branch 72 has directed the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), its agents, officers and employees, and all persons acting in their behalf to restore peacefully to Financial Building (Subic Bay) Corp. the possession and control of the 132 housing units at El Kabayo (popularly known as Forest Hills Village Resort). The Court further directed SBMA to refrain from obstructing or meddling in the operation and management of the housing units or commit acts inimical to the interest of FBC (Subic) in the management and operation of the 132 housing units.

Penned by Judge Ramon S. Caguioa, the Court adjudged that FBC has a clear and legal right to manage and control the operations of the 132 housing units. It also determined that FBC is entitled to an injunctive writ as it stands to suffer irreparable damage as a result of the confusion generated by the illegal take over of SBMA. The Court noted that FBC has been managing the 132 housing units since January 15, 1998 pursuant to a Lease and Development Agreement with SBMA which expires on the October 30, 2040. However, SBMA suddenly took possession and control over the housing complex on July 21, 2005 under a Notice of Closure and take over which triggered FBC to apply with the Regional Trial Court for injunctive relief.

Instead of peacefully turning over the 132 housing units, SBMA has been using all the dubious tricks to prevent even the Olongapo Cout Sheriff from enforcing the writ of injunction. Fully armed SWAT teams were deployed in Forest Hills to harass us and our guests. Even with valid I.D. passes, we are being prevented by SBMA officers/agent from reporting to our place of assignment. Madame President, you can send you r own staff to check what is happening now in the supposedly peaceful, investor friendly and tourist oriented Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

Is SBMA above the rule of law? Or is there a de facto martial law prevailing inside the Subic Bay Freeport Zone?

All we want Madame President is to get back to our work. We have been out of job for almost 5 months due to the illegal SBMA take over. Our families are suffering already. Please help us in our plight.

Thank you very much and a peaceful New Year to you and your family.

Employees of Forest Hills Village Resort

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Study affirms hybrid rice threat to Ifugao rice

BAGUIO CITY—AMERICAN INTEREST in indigenous rice produced by centuries-old terraces in Ifugao and farms of Kalinga has been kindled by test results that indicate that Ifugao "tinawon" and Kalinga "unoy" contain richer fiber than any other rice variety produced today, according to a nongovernment organization working to revive the terraces.

A NONGOVERNMENT group has convinced Ifugao farmers to rebuild their terrace farms, offering them markets in the United States and Canada that want organic rice. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Revitalize Indigenous Cordilleran Entrepreneurs (Rice) Inc. said US laboratory findings from Montana in the last quarter of 2005 validated criticisms that the GMA (Ginintuang Masagani Ani) hybrid rice has become a threat to the indigenous crop.

Victoria Garcia, Rice executive director, said beginning January 2006, organic industry players will try to dissuade Kalinga farmers from participating in the government's hybrid rice project should it displace homegrown rice.

She said Eighth Wonder, a US-based distributor financed by a former US Peace Corps volunteer, has become a "very real market" for "tinawon" and "unoy," which it retails to US organic markets.

Mary Hensley, Eighth Wonder's founder, was assigned in Kalinga between 1976 and 1978, and "understands the culture of the region," Garcia said.

She said the Cereals Organics Inc. of Canada has also signified interest in "tinawon" and "unoy" because of their 12-percent fiber and 4-percent iron content.

Kalinga bested local records by harvesting 21,600 tons of hybrid rice (7.2 tons per hectare) in 2003, months after Ms Arroyo introduced to reporters here Prof. Yuan Long Ping, a Chinese scientist whom she described as the father of hybrid rice.

Hybrid rice is Ms Arroyo's poverty-alleviation solution to farming communities in the country.

Rice's Cordillera "heirloom rice project," which is offered to the World Bank recently, attributed the region's poverty to the absence of commercial opportunities for organic rice that these communities have developed for centuries.

Rice, in a report, said three of 10 families in the mountain region live in poverty.

"In year 2000, about 31 percent (85,426 families) in the Cordillera were living below the poverty line of P13,176.27 ($244) ... Based on these estimates, the province of Ifugao posted the highest poverty incidence in the region) at 55.6 percent [making it one of the] four Cordillera provinces belonging to the poorest 44 provinces of the country," Rice said.

But Garcia said Rice's chief objective is to introduce "culturally appropriate economic enterprise," which hybrid rice will not nurture.

She said the project has confirmed the "steady degradation caused by factors both natural and manmade," and "lack of economic opportunity for the indigenous population is forcing the younger generation to leave."

Rice cites the study of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which observes that 25 percent of these terrace farms have since been abandoned. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Rescuers lose hope of finding 9 fishers

LEGAZPI CITY—THREE DAYS AFTER CONtinuous search and recovery operations, rescuers led by the Mercedez Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council yesterday lost hope of recovering the nine missing fishermen in the coastal areas of Mercedez in Camarines Norte.

Office of Civil Defense Regional Director Arnel Capili said extensive effort has been done to help the victims' families locate and recover the bodies of their loved ones.

Joint operations of the MMDCC, Coast Guard and Air Force stopped yesterday after recovering the body of Danilo Porcales, believed to be the fishing boat's captain and rescuing two of the 12 fishermen after their fishing boat F/V Angelica sank on Monday.

Jude Hernandez, MMDCC head, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that they were able to recover the body at past 12 noon on Wednesday off the coasts of Barangay Vinzons in Mercedez.

"We are hoping that today (Thursday) we could still recover other bodies in the three different coastal barangays in the municipality of Mercedez, but the hostile nature of the waters and heavy rains prevented us from pursuing the operations," he said.

Appeal

But families of other missing fishermen appealed to the MMDCC to continue the operation in the next days in the hope of recovering the bodies of their loved ones.

The two survivors were identified as Nestor Reota and Samuel Senilda. OCD reports said they were rescued by another fishing boat, the FV KenJil, an hour after the incident.

The missing fishermen were identified as Bersal Bonon, Michael Agares, Marcos Ocampo, Zaldy Navarro, Dodong Dangkulos, Junior Ayson, Lando Porcales, Sonny Abrantez and Ruben Espinosa.

In Palawan, fishermen on Wednesday rescued six fishermen hit on Tuesday by a whirlwind in Roxas town.

Fishing boat owner Boy Barte said the boat's crew reported fishing near Green Island in Roxas at about midnight when caught by a whirlwind that spun their boat thrice and broke it in half.

The six crew members, who survived by holding on to the other half of the boat, were found floating in the sea when rescued. Except for some bruises, they suffered no other injuries.

Barte asked Maritime police and the Coast Guard for help to recover the boat's engine so his men could go fishing again.

Since the onset of heavy rains and tropical depressions in Palawan, a number of fishermen getting lost at sea have been reported here. *Gil Francis G. Arevalo and Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Editor survives slay try

TACLOBAN CITY—A newspaper editor in Catarman, Northern Samar survived an attempt on his life by a lone gunman on Monday. Iladio Perfecto, 46, publisher and editor in chief of the "The Catarman Weekly Tribune" was on board his motorcycle at around 10 a.m. and was just a few meters from his home in Camille Homes Subdivision, Barangay Dalakit, Catarman when fired upon by the gunman. Perfecto was able to duck and missed being hit by the bullet from a .45 caliber pistol fired by the gunman, said PO2 Antonio Aducon, the case officer. The assailant immediately fled aboard a motorcycle. Perfecto has been exposing alleged illegal logging and illegal numbers games activities in the province. Eastern Visayas police chief Chief Supt. Eliseo de la Paz said they were looking at many angles in the slay attempt, including personalities who could have been angered by Perfecto's exposes.

Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Surigaonons miss Barbers

BUTUAN CITY—Surigaonons are mourning the loss of former Sen. Robert "Bobby" Barbers who died on Christmas day. "We will surely miss him. He was a great leader of Surigao. No one in the history of Surigao City has ever surpassed his record of public service," said Surigao City Mayor Alfonso Casurra. He also said the former senator's death would cause some effect on the political struggle in the province. The Barbers and Matugas political clans are bitter rivals in the local seats. Casurra, however, said he will remain an ally of the Barbers family despite the former senator's death

Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau

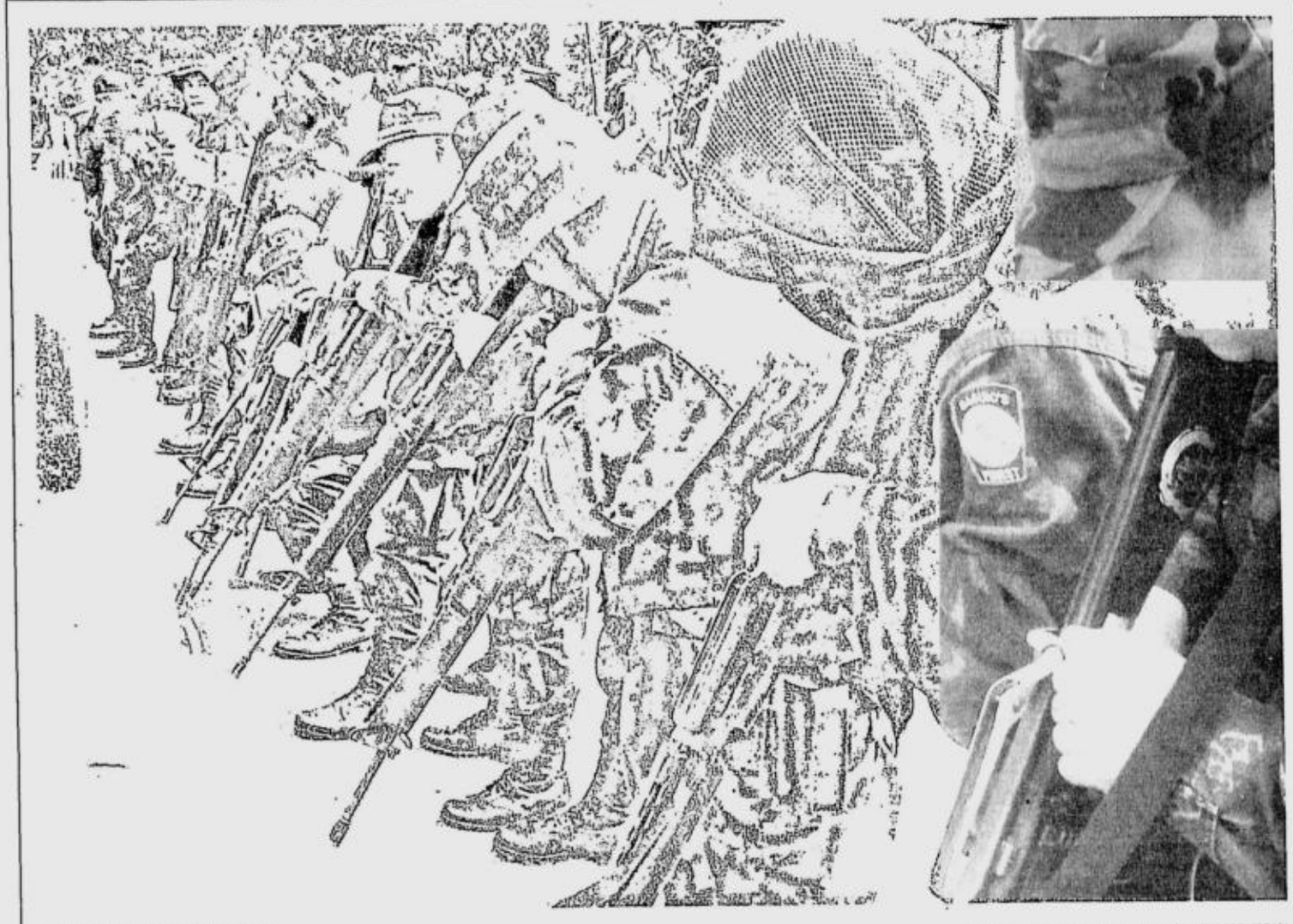
Safe Christmas revelry

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Not a single person was reported hurt during the Christmas revelry here, according to city health officer Dr. Virginia Ramirez. Last year, Ramirez said, only four victims of firecracker explosions were brought to the hospitals for treatment. Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. said the zero-casualty Christmas celebration this year was due to an intensified drive by the local government and the police against firecrackers. The city council passed an ordinance prohibiting the import, transport, distribution, use and sale of firecrackers except during special occasions and when permitted by the local government.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ateneo alumni homecoming

DAVAO CITY—All is set for the Ateneo de Davao Grand Alumni Homecoming today, 7 p.m. at The Venue. The alumni homecoming this year is hosted by the Silver Jubilarians "Huling Barako High School Batch '80." The Ateneo Alumni Office has invited all graduates of high school, college and the Ateneo Law School to come and enjoy a night of renewed camaraderie with fellow Ateneans.



CLEARING ACTION
Members of the Baguio City police mobile group check their firearms for live ammunition to make sure the guns won't be fired indiscriminately during the celebration of New Years Day.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Top NPA leader in Zambo yields

PAGADIAN CITY—A RANKING New People's Army (NPA) commander, his pregnant wife and four comrades surrendered to authorities here during simple rites at the provincial capitol Wednesday.

Merno Mingo, 32, alias commander Bensar, led the NPA's Front Committee Kara, which operates in at least 10 towns in the Zamboanga peninsula.

Bensar's surrender came in the wake of the NPA's heightened offensive against government installations in various parts of the country in connection with the communist movement's 37th founding anniversary.

Senior Supt. Karib Muammil, Zamboanga del Sur provincial police director, said Bensar actually yielded on Monday after Gov. Aurora Cerilles and Lapuyan Mayor Cesar Sulong granted his two demands.

These were the awarding of a parcel of land to his family for them to start a new life and a scholarship for himself.

Bensar later told reporters he wanted to continue his studies in dentistry.

Muammil said Mingo sent surrender feelers through Mayor Sulong a month ago with his two demands. He said he advised the mayor to coordinate with the military.

"Commander Bensar is a top ranking NPA commander. He was involved in several ambushes against military troops," Muammil told the INQUIRER.

Speaking in the vernacular, Mingo said he has not abandoned his principles but he decided to forego the armed struggle because it is not the right thing to do.

The former guerrilla commander who went underground eight years ago said the armed struggle has not helped alleviate the condition of the poor, instead, he said it has aggravated the condition.

"I did not see change in society, divisiveness has worsened," he said.

In Lianga, Surigao del Sur, despite the government's claim that the CPP is already a spent force, its Mindanao Commission maintains they are stronger now.

CPP Mindanao spokesperson Jorge Madlos alias Ka Oris, said that in 2005 alone, the NPA launched 182 tactical offensives in Mindanao and have taken 190 firearms. *Michael Sarcauga and Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Unsung war hero dies in Australia

By Rolando O. Borrinaga
PDI Visayas Bureau

BATO, LEYTE—HE DIED IN A FAR away land, another unsung Leyteño guerrilla hero of World War II.

Quintino G. Kuizon, 82, died in Perth, Australia, his adopted home, last Dec. 23. He died of heart failure while undergoing a knee operation.

Kuizon was a native of Bato, Leyte. While still 18 years old during the war, he was commissioned as second lieutenant by Col. Ruperto Kangleon, the famous guerrilla leader of Leyte.

He earned his rank after he had devised a bullet that helped replenish the dwindling supply of the guerrillas in their struggle against the Japanese invaders.

Tinoy, as Quintino was called, was the practical mechanic in the prominent Kuizon family of Bato.

The Kuizon family occasionally accommodated American and Filipino guerrilla officers in their evacuation house in the town's outskirt and also provided refuge to some prominent families from Cebu, including that of pre-war Senate President Mariano Cuenco.

When the family's rice and corn mill ran out of diesel supply due to the war, the machine was kept running by fueling it with coconut oil. Though it operated at a low speed with the alternate fuel, Quintino also used it to charge the Willard battery for their hidden radio set with an improvised charger from their idled Buick car.

Other skills

Quintino was also good at radios, and it was this knowledge and his practical mechanic skills that assured his significant contribution to the Allied war efforts.

In 1943, American and Filipino guerrillas in the Philippines needed to communicate with the Allied Headquarters under Gen. Douglas MacArthur in Australia. Kangleon assigned Quintino to this task under the supervision of American Maj. David Richardson, whose war exploits in Leyte was made into a movie.

Movie

The movie was based on Ira Wolfert's book, "An American Guerrilla in the Philippines." Quintino's feat was mentioned in this book, but under a different first name.

Quintino was tasked with installing a transmitter that arrived in Leyte by submarine. But the transmitter was not accompanied by a generator.

Quintino and two helpers spent nearly two months to repair an old defective generator that was secured locally. They fabricated its piston rings without proper materials and tools.

The transmitter, with its generator, was eventually installed in a remote and heavily forested mountaintop in Barrio Nahulid of Libagon town, which served as Richardson's base. Through this communication facility that Quintino operated and maintained, Kangleon was able to establish regular communications with MacArthur's headquarters in Australia.

Life in Bato and in other parts of southern Leyte during the war was described by engineer Porfirio G. Kuizon, Quintino's brother, in his wartime memoirs titled "The Good War in Leyte," which was published in the Bulletin of the American Historical Collection in 2004.

In 1945, after the liberation of Leyte, Quintino joined the Merchant Marines on the recommendation of Major Chick Parsons, another American guerrilla leader. The job enabled him to travel around the world several times. His first trip was to Australia, where he eventually migrated and settled.

Quintino married his girl friend, Rosa, an evacuee from Davao, during the war. The union produced 12 children and 34 grandchildren.

Group says Muslims won't back Cha-cha

ZAMBOANGA CITY—MUSLIMS are opposed to the Arroyo administration's move to amend the 1987 Constitution, according to results of consultations conducted by the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy (PCID) in three Mindanao areas with majority Muslim population.

Amina Rasul-Bernardo, PCID chair, said objection to Charter change initiatives surfaced during consultation meetings the PCID held in Jolo, Sulu, Cotabato City and Marawi City in November.

The consultations were done with the support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Bernardo said questions raised during the consultations included apprehensions on what would happen to the Sept. 2, 1996 peace agreement between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and where the ongoing peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front would be headed to under a new Charter.

Bernardo, quoting recorded meeting inputs in all three occasions, said the timing of the revived move to amend the Charter was the most common concern among those who attended the consultations.

"They were saying, 'Why now?', 'Why the rush?'" she said.

She said many of the respondents in the consultation rounds wanted that Charter change, if any, should be done through a constitutional convention rather than Congress doing it through a constituent assembly. *Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2005

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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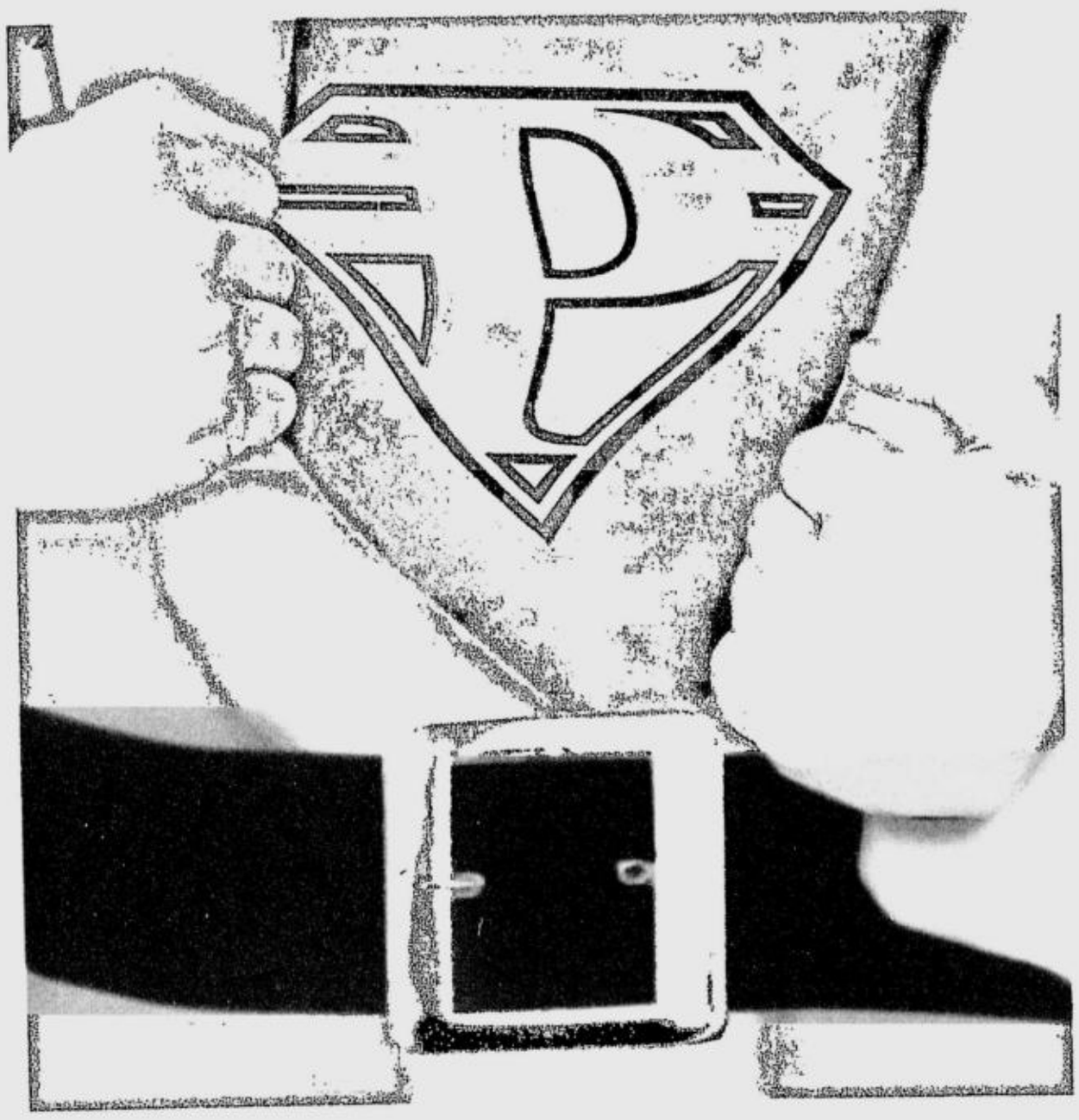
5 killed, 2 hurt in Malabon ambush



By Nancy C. Carvajal

FIVE PERSONS WERE KILLED while two others were seriously wounded when a group of armed men tried to ambush a businesswoman in Malabon City yesterday.

The group's target, Alicia Ordinario, a big time fish trader at the Malabon market, was hit in the shoulder and taken to a hospital for treatment.

Three of her bodyguards were among the dead. The police identified them as Benjamin Plopino, Michael Gabat and a certain alias Jon-jon Notorious. Also killed was Rosenda Orantino, who was beside Ordinario, when the armed men fired on the trader's car.

The fourth casualty, who remained unidentified, was one of the eight armed men who staged the ambush.

A tricycle driver, Reynaldo Coson, was wounded.

Northern Police District director, Chief Supt. Raul Gonzales, described the assassination attempt as a well planned attack.

"All shots were at close range and with intent to kill, but the group missed their target," he said.

Gonzales based his observation on the bullet holes in the two cars used by the victims.

"We cannot establish the motive just yet pending further investigation," Gonzales added.

According to the police official, Ordinario, Orantino, Plopino and Jon-jon rode in the trader's car. They were followed by a van where Gabat and Ordinario's relatives, including a one-year-old baby girl, were on board.

As Ordinario's car went by the corner of M.H. del Pilar and Sanchez streets in Tinajeros, the suspects opened fire on the vehicle.

Plopino, who was driving, was killed instantly while Jon-jon was shot in the head after he alighted from the car and traded shots with the suspects.

Some of Ordinario's bodyguards in the van managed to fire back, hitting one of the suspects.

Found in his pocket were documents allegedly outlining their plan to kill the fish trader, Gonzales said.

Upon spotting the trader's car, the men were to part their hair ("*hawiin ang buhok*") to indicate that the attack was to push through.

"The documents found on the dead suspect jibed with the witnesses' account of the ambush," said Malabon chief of police Supt. Moises Guevarra.

According to witnesses, the eight men had waited in the area for hours before the incident.

Four of them were on board two scooters while the rest waited on foot, the witnesses added.

SANTA'S WATCHING REM ZAMORA

A policewoman of the Manila Police District puts masking tape on her service pistol as a safety measure against indiscriminate firing on New Year's Eve.

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Suspected robbers gun down Makati cop

By Jocelyn R. Uy

A POLICEMAN WAS SHOT DEAD when he tried to accost five suspected bank robbers on board a van in Makati City yesterday morning.

P03 Avelino "Abel" Santos was on patrol along Pasong Tamo corner J.P Rizal Street at 10:20 a.m. when he chanced upon a green Hyundai van in the area that aroused his suspicions, said Senior Supt. Mario Valerio, city police chief.

When Santos knocked on the van's door as it slowed down because of the heavy traffic on Pasong Tamo, the five suspects on board opened the door and dragged him inside the van.

They then shot the policeman pointblank with a .38-caliber revolver, Valerio told reporters yesterday.

Santos, who was hit in the ear, was declared dead on arrival at the Makati Medical Center.

Rustico Garcia, a Makati Public Safety enforcer, went after the suspects when he saw the incident.

Garcia sustained a bruise on his right cheek and a wound in the wrist. The police was able to recover the vehicle, which they later learned had been rented by the suspects.

When they saw that they were attracting attention, three of the suspects jumped out of the van and ran to the nearest apartment building for cover.

The landlord of the Rancher's Building told the INQUIRER that the suspects went to the four-story building's rooftop.

The police later arrested four suspects identified as Felix Ponting, 24, Allan Capuno, 28, Richie Sevilla, 28 and Roselyn Bahin, 24. Only one of the suspects was able to elude arrest, they claimed. But according to a Makati police officer who requested anonymity, nine suspects were on board the van. Five were able to escape, he added.

Sevilla told reporters that he had only been hired by the group allegedly for a beach outing. He added that they were in the area to pick up three more members of the group.

Five .38-caliber pistols were recovered from the suspects. A fragmentation grenade was found in Bahin's possession.

The police said it was possible that the heavily armed suspects were preparing to rob one of the pawnshops or banks in the area. There are five pawnshops and a bank near the crime scene.

The suspects will be charged with murder and illegal possession of firearms and explosives, Valerio said.

A (SAD) CHRISTMAS STORY

Good times missed by families of 3 brothers

By DJ Yap

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS WILL NEVER be the same again for Aurora Jimeno, 60, a widow whose sons, Froilan and Arnold, were allegedly gunned down by a Quezon City policeman on Dec. 25 over a minor traffic altercation.

Within minutes, the mother of six lost a third son, Ferdinand, who died of a heart attack upon learning what happened to his brothers.

"*Hindi namin naramdaman ang Pasko* (We never felt it was Christmas)," said Aurora in an interview Wednesday night during her sons' wake at their home in Novaliches, Quezon City.

Froilan, 36, was a referee of the Philippine Basketball League. Arnold, 28, was a businessman, and Ferdinand, 39, an architect.

Aurora had no premonition that tragedy would strike her family three times on Christmas day. "There was no warning. We were busy preparing for a party," she said.

"Froilan and Arnold were going to rent a videoke for the affair later that night," she said. "I asked them why both of them had to get the videoke, but they said they wanted to go for the ride."

On board their brand new scooters, the brothers were cruising along General Luis corner Damong Maliit Streets in Barangay Nagkaisang Nayon when their vehicles collided with a Toyota Revo at around 10:55 a.m.

Senior Insp. Michael Sanchez, 36, and his relatives were on board the vehicle. According to police accounts, the Jimenos and Sanchez had a heated argument over who was at fault.

Sanchez, detailed at the Quezon City Police District mobile patrol unit, then allegedly took out his M16 rifle and shot the brothers, the police said.

When Ferdinand heard what happened, he rushed to the scene and took Froilan and Arnold to the Quezon City General Hospital. After doctors told him later that his brothers did not make it, he collapsed and never regained consciousness.

"He did not have a history of any sickness," Aurora said. "Perhaps his heart could not bear the thought that his brothers died," Aurora said.

GRIEVING mother Aurora Jimeno at her sons' wake: A joyless Christmas RAFFY LERMA

The three were close as only brothers could be, said Froilan's widow, Malou. "Before going to work, Froilan often dropped by to have breakfast with his brothers," she said.

Sanchez turned himself in that afternoon, accompanied by his lawyer. He was charged with two counts of homicide in the Quezon City prosecutor's office.

But the charges were later amended to murder by the city prosecutor, said investigator PO3 Florencio Escobido.

Now detained at Camp Karingal, Sanchez was also suspended from the service for 60 days on orders of QCPD director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr.

From the merrymaking of Christmas Eve, Dec. 25 was spent in mourning and sadness, said Aurora, a widow for the past 14 years.

The same mood will probably prevail for the rest of the holiday season, she added.

Whether she is surrounded by family or alone in her room, Aurora has to muster the strength not to wallow in grief, she said.

"I have to be strong for the sake of my children and grandchildren," she said, adding that she is determined to pursue the cases against the policeman. "No matter what happens, we will fight for what we think is right. We will not be paid off. Three lives were lost. We will not back down."

Froilan's wife Malou was left with the task of raising their children Arvin, Michael, and Alessandra. Arnold is survived by wife, Regina, and children E.J. and Julianna. Ferdinand left his wife, Thelma, and children Iko, Enan, Fritz and Felicity. The childrens' ages range from 15 years old to eight months old.

The Jimeno brothers had three other siblings: Evangeline, Joselito, and Christopher.

Malou said her husband left her with just enough money to start a hog-raising business. Arnold's and Ferdinand's widows, Regina and Thelma, derive their income from tending "tiangge" (flea market) stalls.

Though the victims' families feel all is not lost, they said they miss something more precious: The chance to enjoy the Yuletide season together in future gatherings.

"Maybe we will never celebrate Christmas again," said Malou.

Manila to party nonstop at New Year countdown

By Margaux C. Ortiz

ALL ROADS LEAD TO MANILA ON NEW Year's Eve.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza has urged city residents to join the nonstop revelry at the Rajah Sulayman Park across the Roxas Boulevard Baywalk and witness a spectacular fireworks display to greet the New Year.

"We are inviting everyone to bring their families and loved ones and join us in the festivities as we greet 2006 with a big bang," Atienza said in a statement. He said the city government would co-host the free party with GMA 7 which would broadcast the event live.

Atienza reminded motorists that traffic along Roxas Boulevard would be rerouted for the occasion.

The northbound lane of Roxas Boulevard, from Pedro Gil Street to Quirino Avenue, will be closed to vehicular traffic as early as 12 noon on Dec. 31. The southbound lane will also be closed at 3 p.m. Parking spaces will be provided on both ends of the stretch to accommodate residents who would participate in the merrymaking, city government officials said.

The mayor reminded barangay leaders and police officials to strictly impose the ban on burning tires and indiscriminate firing of guns during the New Year celebration. Atienza also ordered the Manila Fire Department to remain alert in case of emergencies.

METROBRIEFS

Game over

THE GAME is up for two suspected robbers who had victimized several business establishments in Las Piñas City. The suspects, identified as cousins Carlo and Reynaldo Erasquin, were finally arrested after robbing the Discovery Drugstore on Naga Road, Barangay Pulang Lupa Dos, on Wednesday afternoon. Insp. Ferjen Torred, criminal investigation division chief, told the INQUIRER yesterday that the two were collared after a brief chase. The police later discovered that the suspects were the same men who robbed a meat shop on Dec. 23 and a grocery store on Dec. 21. Both men were charged with robbery-holdup in the city prosecutor's office yesterday.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Gun dealer arrested

A SUSPECTED gun dealer believed to be supplying high powered firearms to criminal syndicates has been arrested. National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) officer in charge Nestor Mantaring identified the suspect as Boni Bole Datoy, 40, of Murphy, Quezon City. He was caught last month after the NBI National Capital Region headed by Regional Director Ruel Lasala received information about his illegal activities. Seized from the suspect were three M-16 rifles, an expensive Ultimax rifle, four .45 caliber pistols, three .357 revolvers, and other assorted firearms. "We are now looking into the possible connection of Datoy to previously arrested gunrunners," Lasala said during a press conference yesterday. The NBI had arrested a senior police officer and his civilian companion near Camp Crame for illegally selling high-powered firearms last Sept 9. "They all appear to be part of a big syndicate involved in the illegal firearms trade," Lasala added.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Fiery Wednesday night

TWO FIRES were reported in the metropolis on Wednesday night. Firemen reported the first incident at about 7 p.m. when an unattended cell phone charger caused a fire in a two-story house on Dela Cruz Street, Mandaluyong City. "We are advising residents to always watch out for plugged appliances, like electric fans or flat irons, which can trigger fires," F02 Marcos Cabiso told the INQUIRER. More than four hours later, a leaking liquified petroleum gas tank caused a fire at the Chowking fastfood restaurant on Apelo St., Pasay City. F03 Renato Recto said only the outlet's ceiling was damaged in the fire which destroyed about P100,000 worth of property. The blaze started at 11:20 p.m. and was put out after 30 minutes. No casualties were reported in the incident although several kitchen workers suffered minor burns. "The restaurant was already closed at that time. They were only cleaning the place," Recto added.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Jocelyn R. Uy

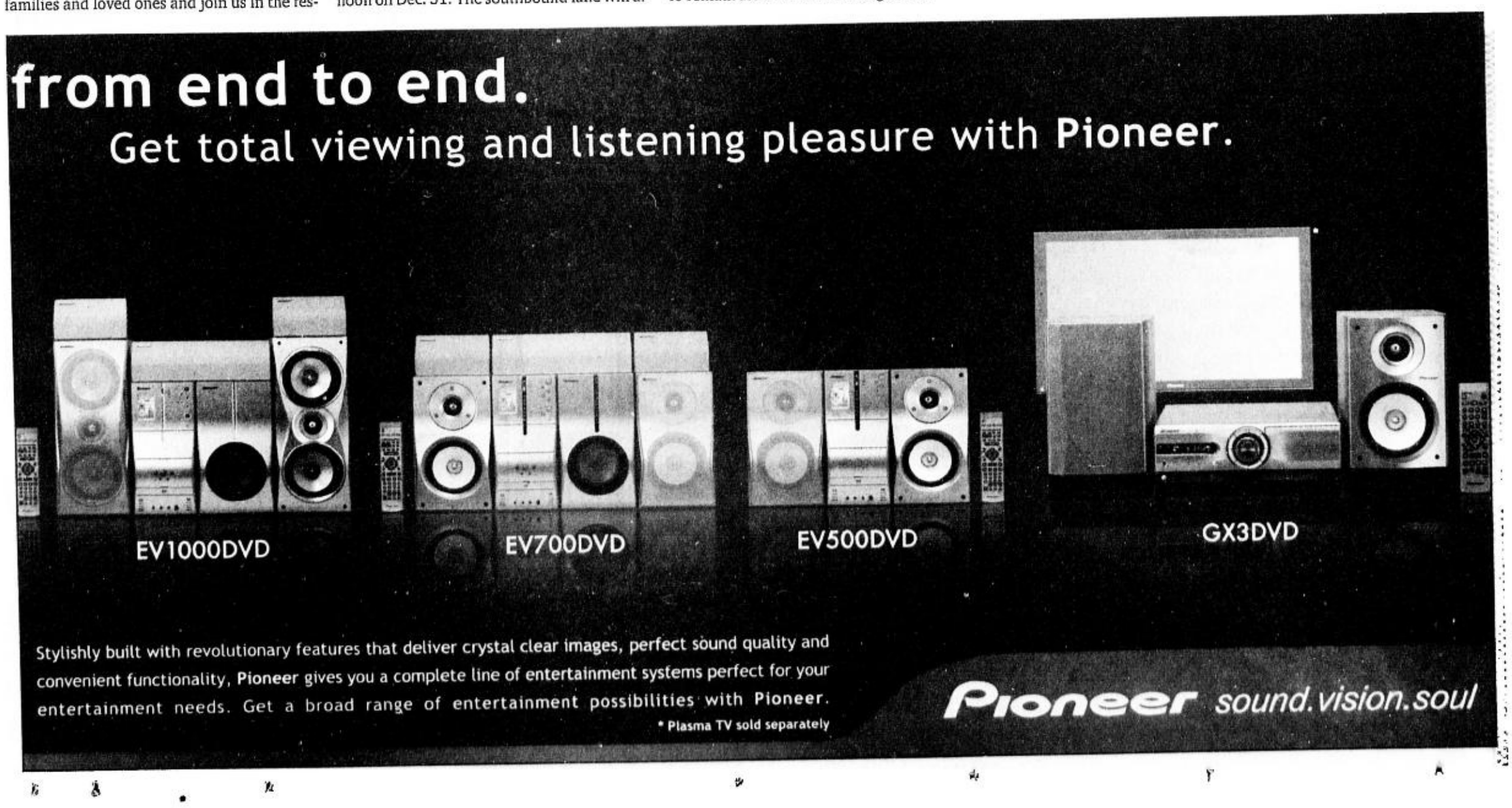
Calling on noisemakers

WELCOMING the New Year can be done without powerful firecrackers. All you have to do is make a lot of noise. Over a thousand motorcycle and tricycle drivers will join Oplan Kaladkad, a parade in Marikina City, today. From 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., they will go around the city, with old iron sheets and cans attached to their bikes. "We want to show that we can celebrate the new year without spending on firecrackers," City Management Development Office Head Nicasio Cruz said. "Not only will we save money, but we will also avoid accidents," he added. The parade will be a prelude to a free concert at the City Riverbanks Amphitheater in Barangay Barangka, which will end with a 15-minute fireworks display. "The fireworks display will be for the entire city already so our residents will no longer have to buy firecrackers," Mayor Marides Fernando said in an earlier interview. The city has stepped up its own Oplan Iwas Paputok program, with an ambulance equipped with a public address system going around Marikina to warn residents about the dangers of firecrackers. "So far, we have not recorded any injuries because of firecrackers," City Health Officer Alberto Herrera told the INQUIRER.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Fernando Air Base school's grand reunion

THE FERNANDO Air Base Elementary School will hold its first ever grand reunion today at the Airmen's Club of Fernando Air Base in Lipa City. Maj. Buboy Parcon of the organizing committee said the festivities for batches 1953 to 1985 will begin after the 8 a.m. Mass on the school campus, next to the reunion venue.



3G for real

SMART leads the next big thing in mobile technology

A Perfect "30"

Among the companies that applied for a Third Generation (3G) license, SMART ranked highest, garnering a perfect score of 30 based on the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) 30-point grading system designed to gauge the capability of aspiring telco operators to massively and effectively provide 3G services.

As a result, Smart has been assigned the largest radio frequency allocation - 15 MHz compared to 10 MHz for the other operators. Moreover, it now has the choice of the best frequency spectrum. This will enable Smart to rapidly deploy its 3G network nationwide and also offer the highest quality 3G service to its subscribers.

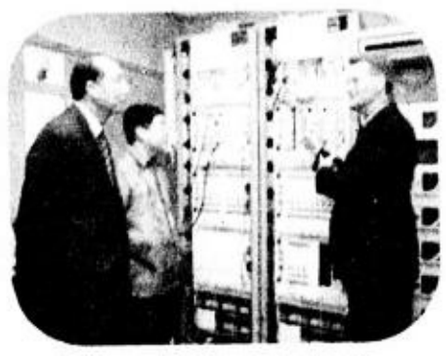
"We have already ordered the network facilities needed to establish nationwide 3G coverage in the shortest possible time," Smart President and CEO Napoleon Nazareno said. "We will repeat the rapid roll-out that we accomplished in deploying, first, our analog and then, our GSM network infrastructures. We are in 3G for real."

Get ready to experience technology that allows for faster data transmission speeds from 114 Kbps up to 2 Mbps. Soon, Smart subscribers here and abroad will benefit from the convenience of high-speed data communications and mobile multimedia services such as video conferencing, audio streaming and mobile Internet.

Priming a Revolution

Smart Communications, Inc., the country's leading wireless service provider started preparations for a seamless transition to 3G as early as five years ago. In December 2000, Smart, in cooperation with Nokia Networks conducted the first successful 3G video call in the country in the presence of NTC officials. Using experimental equipment, this test call recorded data transfer rates of up to 216.9 Kbps.

SMART's installation of 3G-upgradeable base station equipment in its GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) network has made a transition to 3G easier and faster.



"The installation of this modular GSM equipment fits neatly into SMART's overall 3G preparations and operations. And now that the 3G equipment is available, the 3G capability of these base stations can be readily activated, greatly simplifying the roll-out of 3G infrastructure," Smart's Nazareno said.

Shown in the photo are (L-R): NAPOLEON L. NAZARENO, SMART President and CEO and then NTC Deputy Commissioner, NESTOR C. DACANAY listening to MARKKU NIEMINEN, General Manager for Smart GSM, Nokia Philippines, make a presentation on the experimental 3G system back in December 2000.

Real and Tested

In November this year, Smart demonstrated its readiness to offer a full-range of 3G services in a live demo at an international conference in Cebu. Witnessed by the members of the press, this was conducted in conjunction with the annual conference of the Inter-working Roaming Expert Group (IREG) of the GSM Association.

During the demo, the company not only showcased a live video conference call on a Smart-to-Smart network, but also completed an International Roaming call between Smart and Telecom Italia Mobile. Also, it sampled advanced services such as broadcast streaming and simultaneous voice calls and messaging.

"The success of these latest 3G tests reinforces Smart's leadership position to efficiently support real applications in a 3G network," the Smart CEO said.

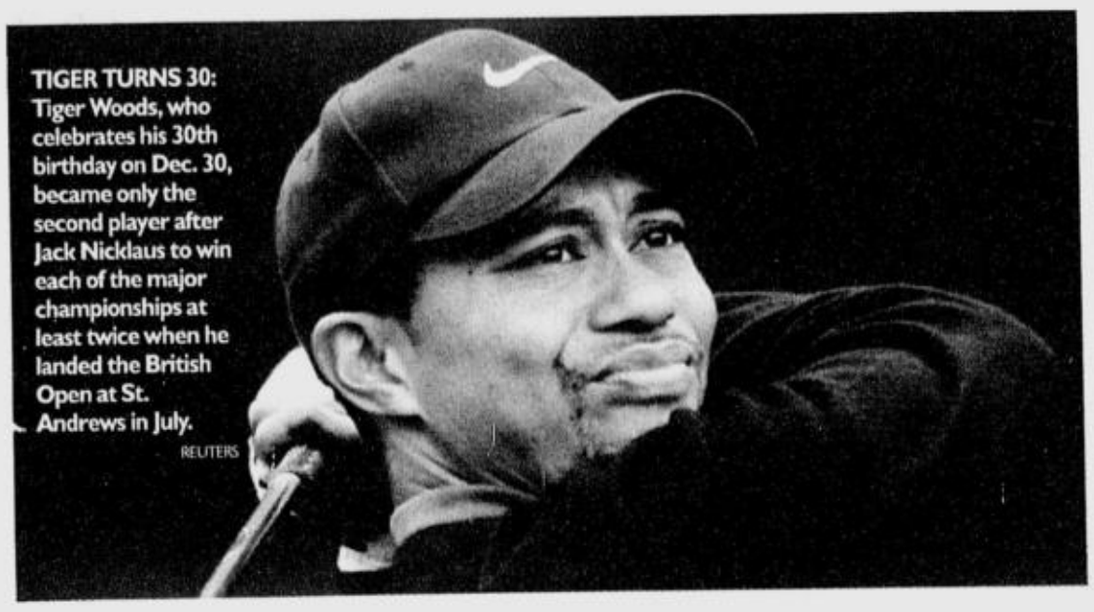
Creating extraordinary innovations and providing high quality service have enabled Smart to establish its leadership in the wireless industry. And now, with Smart 3G, it will continue to provide mobile solutions for future generations.
Brace yourself for the nation's pioneer in mobile technology and get ready for another amazing breakthrough from Smart.

Smart 3G-capable phones: Nokia N70 (above), Nokia N91 (right) and Nokia N90 (main photo).

**Experience SMART 3G for yourself with a free demo at the following SMART Wireless Centers: SMART Tower, Alabang Town Center, Shangri-La Mall, Powerplant Rockwell and SM Cebu. Smart 3G demo will also be available at Megamall and SM North EDSA SMART Wireless Centers starting January 15, 2006.*

SMART

Sa tibay, hindi basta-basta bumibigay.



TIGER TURNS 30: Tiger Woods, who celebrates his 30th birthday on Dec. 30, became only the second player after Jack Nicklaus to win each of the major championships at least twice when he landed the British Open at St. Andrews in July. REUTERS

Unity behind SEAG success

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS OF the country's campaign in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games was a product of a "rare unity" forged by the Philippine Olympic Committee, Philippine Sports Commission, private sponsors and the First Gentleman's Foundation.

By putting their acts together, the country finally captured the overall championship in the biennial event, a feat that can never be done by any "master plan" but was made possible by "genuine acts of unity," according to Rep. Monico Puentevella yesterday.

The POC vice president, who served longest as PSC commissioner for seven years, stressed that the different sports groups only need to coordinate closely with each other to achieve loftier goals in the future.

"The present POC can initiate a new plan on current data with the logistics coming from the PSC, Pagcor, the FG Foundation and the sports godfathers," said Puentevella.

He also practically dismissed the call by former PSC chair Philip Ella Juico to revive the old PSC master plan , saying "no sports plan in the world can ever succeed without the proper logistics."

"Without proper budget, the most beautiful plan in the world will still fail," added Puentevella, who also served as PSC commissioner under Juico midway in the last decade.

Juico earlier stressed the need to revive his master plan for RP sports based on a drawn out strategic plans for all national sports associations to help officials pick the 10 sports disciplines that will be lavished with attention in pursuit of the Olympic gold medal dream.

Paragua gains on Super GM

OPEN SECTION

6.0-GM Zurab Azmaiparashvili (Georgia); 5.5-GM Mark Paragua (Philippines); GM Zhang Zhong (China); GM Ni Hua (China); GM Victor Mikhalevski (Israel); GM Koneru Humpy (India); 5.0-IM Bao Quang (Vietnam); IM Salor Sitanggang (Indonesia); 5.0-FM Julio Catalino Sadorra (Philippines); 4.5-GM Nelson Mariano II (Philippines); GM Viktor Varavin (Russia), WGM Ruofan Li (China), IM Jayson Gonzales (Philippines); IM Richard Bitoon (Philippines); Tu Hoang Thai (Vietnam); IM Ashot Nadanian (Armenia)

SINGAPORE—MARK PARAGUA just wanted Jayson Gonzales to know that earning a grandmaster title is not that easy.

The 21-year-old Paragua, the highest-ranked Filipino player who became a full-fledged GM only this year, beat Gonzales on Thursday to quash his compatriot's bid for a final GM result while inching closer behind solo leader Super GM Zurab Azmaiparashvili of Georgia in the 2005 Singapore Masters and Challengers International Open chess championships at the Hotel Royal in Newton Road here.

PARAGUA: Eyeing the title.

Paragua climbed to 5.5 points after seven rounds and now stood half a point behind Azmaiparashvili, who agreed to a 10-move draw with GM Ni Hua of China.

Tied with Paragua were Hua, GM Zhang Zhong of China, GM Victor Mikhalevski of Israel and former world junior women champion GM Koneru Humpy of India.

Zhang and Mikhalevski, a former European champion, split the point after 31 moves of a Ruy Lopez Opening while Humpy beat defending champion GM Susanto Megaranto of Indonesia in other featured matches.

Azmaiparashvili also drew with Zhong in the sixth round.

It was a bitter loss for Gonzales, who held the advantage only to commit successive blunders in the 17th and 18th moves that allowed Paragua to win in 30 moves of a London System.

Gonzales was stuck at 4.5 points, the same output of countrymen GM Nelson Mariano II and IM Richard Bitoon, GM Viktor Varavin of Russia, WGM Ruofan Li of China, IM Ashot Nadanian of Armenia and Tu Hoang Thai of Vietnam.

Gonzales bid for his third and final GM result is over because he has played only with one GM (Paragua) and his eight and penultimate round opponent late Thursday is only an IM, Salor Sitanggang of Indonesia.

In the Challengers section, Filipino Rustum Tolentino, Boy T and Wilman Endey of Indonesia shared the lead with 6 points. *NM Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Dr. Jose Rizal. His fearless views have inspired us for over 20 years.

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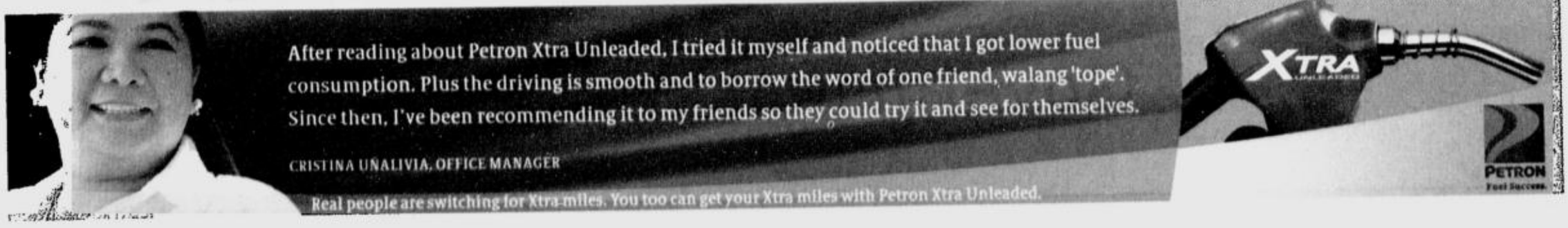

'Quest for Olympic Gold' revs up

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

FOLLOWING ITS RUNAWAY VICTORY IN the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, the Philippines is now talking Olympic gold.

Bristling with newfound confidence, Filipino athletes—the boxers in particular—are honing not only for next year's Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, but also for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

"Go for gold," President Macapagal-Arroyo told the victorious athletes recently, citing boxing, which won eight SEAG gold medals, as the sport most likely to win that first ever Olympic gold. "Boxing must get more budget," said the Chief Executive, who also cited diving, archery and taekwondo as the other medal prospects in the Beijing Games.

Boxing association president Manny Lopez, who is also secretary general of the Federation of Asian Amateur Boxing, thanked the President's special mention of his sport, saying "this will inspire the boxers to work harder to achieve that elusive goal," adding that "the boys are not resting on their laurel, that's for sure."

Former Philippine Sports Commission chair and Manila Mayor Mel Lopez said the boxers have improved tremendously. "New techniques, short punches and well-delivered jabs are the boxers' main weapons.

"Habang umaatras, sumusuntok. I'm really happy and proud of this great team." He also lauded PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez for his valuable contribution to Philippine sports and boxing's benevolent benefactors for reinvigorating the project "Quest for Olympic Gold."

"Quest" was launched in 1986 by Lopez and his sportsmen-businessmen friends, among them SMC boss Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, plastics manufacturer William Gatchalian, Vic-Vic Villavicencio of the Triple V Group of Companies, TV man Carlos "Bobong" Velez of Vintage Enterprises and Pacific Concrete Products and, much later, Pacific Heights.

Thus far, "Quest for Olympic Gold" has given handsome cash incentives to 1988 Seoul Games boxing bronze medal winner Leopoldo Serantes and Arianne Cerdeña, gold medalist in the demonstration sport of bowling. It also rewarded 1992 Barcelona Olympic boxing bronze medal winner Roel Velasco and Roel's younger brother, Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, who bagged a silver medal in the 1996 Atlanta Games, duplicating the silver-medal victory of Anthony Villanueva in Tokyo in 1964 when the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines was then headed by the late philanthropist Eugenio "Gene" Puyat.

How do we achieve this "Quest for Olympic Gold?"

First of all, there should be a continuity of the plans and programs in the development of sports in the Philippines. However, this has not been fully implemented because of frequent changes in government.

As former PSC chair Philip Ella Juico said, "anything done by the previous administration (of the PSC) is deemed bad." He said that in 1996 when he was the PSC chief, he submitted a master plan for sports that included preparation for and participation in the Olympic Games, Asian and Southeast Asian Games and World Championships. But this was scrapped in 1998 when a new administration took over.

Juico added he also gave a copy of his plan to the Neda (National Economic Development Authority) which would have endorsed it for foreign financial support but this, too, was shelved. "It landed in the waste basket," lamented Juico, who is now dean in graduate school at La Salle University.

According to Juico, his master plan would end the looming debate over which sports should be the "Chosen 10" from among the 40 national sports association because it has the formula to help the Philippines win its first Olympic gold. "We can even save money by following this master plan."

His master plan focuses mainly on the promotion of mass sports, the fundamental component of national sports development which, sadly, has been neglected in the past because of its inability to capture the interest of the public. The principal concern of mass sports is to have the greatest number of Filipinos, "regardless of age, gender, talent and capability" to participate in sporting activities together. The focus is on participation—for health, recreation and catharsis.

In the elite sports category, the PSC shall promote the nationwide search for specially talented athletes. It shall also establish the National Youth Sports Talent Reserve for the buildup of elite talents; provide scholarships, grants and allowances to the athletes, their trainers and support staff; and develop opportunities for athletes to gain further training and experience in high level competitions, among others.

PBA Playoff phase crucial for imports

IT DIDN'T COME AS A SURPRISE that Purefoods ended up as the first team to earn an outright semifinal berth in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference.

The Giants, after all, boast of one of the most prolific imports this conference in Marquin Chandler.

The 6-foot-4 former San Jose Spartan stalwart averages 23.7 points, 13.4 rebounds and a league-best 1.9 blockshots—numbers largely credited for the sudden resurgence of the Giants, who are in their first Final Four appearance in the last three seasons.

Now with the playoff stretch of the season-opening tournament just around the corner, the rest of the eight-team field expectedly hopes to have a Chandler-like performance from their respective imports.

Crowd favorite Barangay Ginebra may be the closest one to doing so.

Since bringing in one-time Golden State Warrior Chris Porter for the injured Sean Lampley, the 9-7 Kings had been on a roll, winning their last two games in the classification round to earn the right to meet Red Bull in the playoff for the second automatic semis berth on Jan. 4 at the Astrodome.

Porter, from Auburn University, normed 30 points—on 60.5 percent shooting—11.5 rebounds and 3.5 assists in the two games he played for the Kings, including a 96-89 triumph over the Alaska Aces on Christmas Day.

Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen admitted the 27-year-old Porter, selected by the Warriors in the second round of the NBA Draft, readily gave his team a new look.

RAYMUNDO: The championship is more important.

NCRAA breeds cage stars

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION Athletic Association (NCRAA) has become a breeding ground of future basketball stars and coaches.

The list is impressive: Rich Alvarez, Don Allado, Ren Ren Ritualo, Dwight Lago, Elmer Lago, Yancy and Ranidel de Ocampo, Ervin Sotto, Francis Adriano, Junnel Mendiola, Mark Pingris, Gary David, Joey Mente, Frederick Canlas, Dino Aldeguer, Willie Wilson and Warren Ybanez..

They have either began their careers in the league or used it to further sharpen their skills.

Even some of today's best bench tacticians began their careers in the NCRAA, namely Koy Banal, Boysie Zamar, Jing Ruiz, Leo Austria and Gabby Velasco.

AN ATHLETE tries bio fresh socks.

Athlete's foot that sme

ATHLETES LIVE IN A STRESSFUL world. Daily practices, punishing workouts and actual games can take their toll on even the toughest bodies. If not physically, psychologically.

It is not uncommon among athletes to have smelly feet, owing to stress, hectic schedule and, sometimes, improper hygiene.

To help athletes cope with these tough conditions, Burlington Socks is now offering Bio Fresh antimicrobial socks for men and women in the sports world. Bio Fresh antimicrobial technology eliminates bacteria and microorganisms that cause odor. This is absorbed into the socks and stays effective after repeated washing.

Biofresh socks, from sports patron Burlington Industries Phils (BIP) Inc., has been caring for Pinoy's feet for decades. Fact is, it's the Philippine Basketball Association's official socks.

"We have prioritized in our Research and Development, those innovations that will give our clients better protection and enable them to pamper the most taken-for-granted part of their anatomy —their feet," said Ruddy Tan, BIP's general manager and team manager of the

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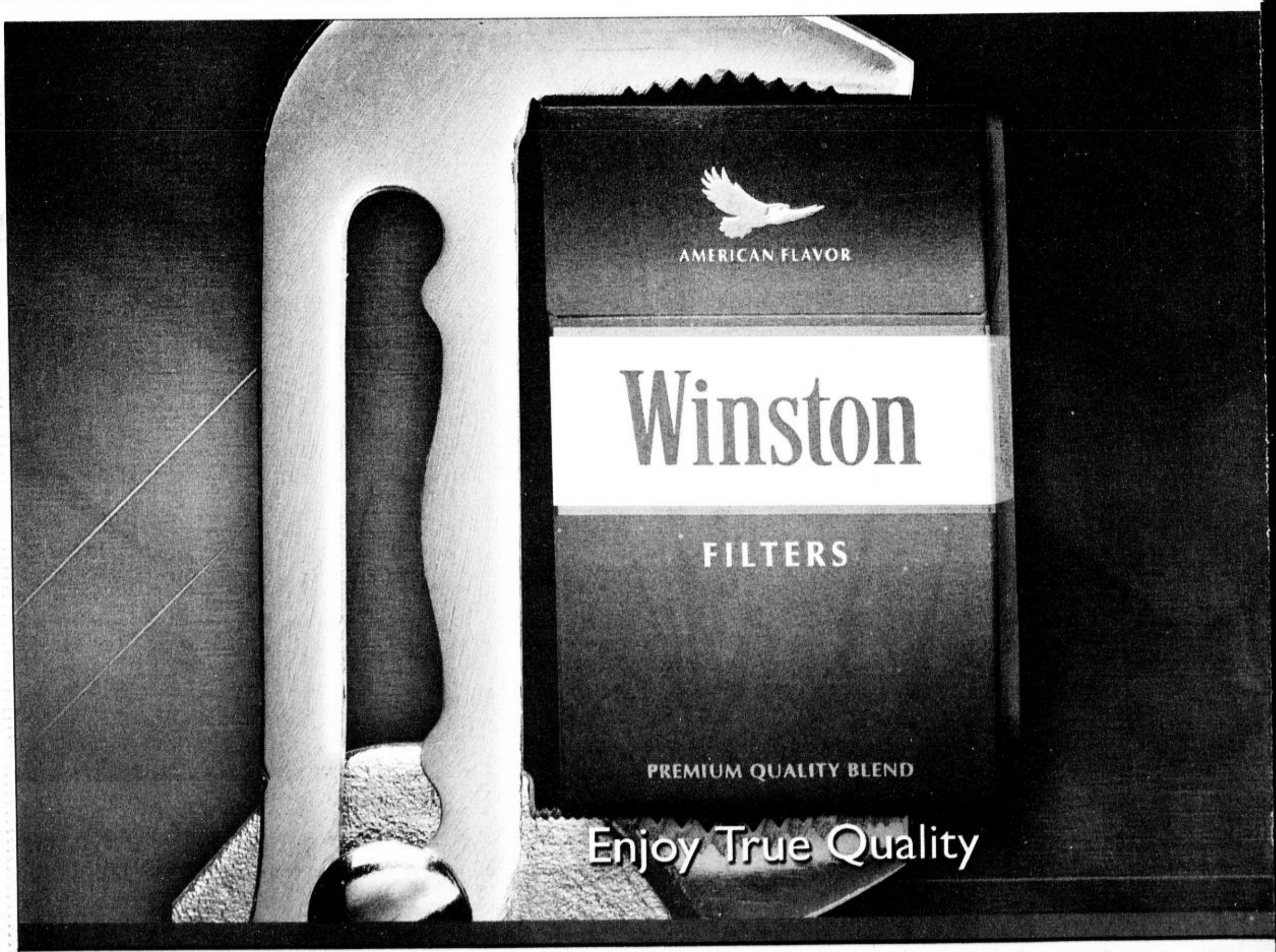

Government Warning: Cigarette sm

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Raymundo still leads best player aspirants

By June Navarro

KERBY RAYMUNDO CONTINUES TO STAND TALL OVER A SOLID cast of contenders for the best player of the conference award.

The Purefoods Chunkee center has kept the mantle of leadership in the contest for the most coveted individual plum in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference after 16 games in the classification phase.

"I really don't think about it," said the 6-foot-6 Raymundo. "*Mas importante ang* championship (The championship is more important)."

Raymundo has a leading total of 999 statistical points based on his averages in scoring, rebounding, assists, steals, blocks and the Giants' won-game bonus.

Purefoods, which last held the lead after the elimination round during its title run in the 2002 Governors Cup, topped the eliminations this time with a 10-6 win-loss record that rewarded the Giants with an outright semifinal seat.

Raymundo got 300 bonus points from those victories and earned 699 statistical points after averaging 14.8 points, 9.1 rebounds, 2.6 assists, 0.3 steals and 1.4 blocks in 16 games.

Asi Taulava of Talk 'N Text and Barangay Ginebra's Mark Caguioa also made great strides from their previous placings during the first round of the eliminations.

From third, Taulava had gone a notch higher to crowd Raymundo with his 923 statistical points total. The 2003 MVP had 13.5 points, 11.1 rebounds, 1.4 assists, 0.4 steals and 1.4 blocks for 653 points on top of the 270 bonus points as a result of Talk 'N Text's 9-7 record.

Caguioa, the PBA Press Corps Player of the Week, made an impressive leap from fifth to third overall after compiling 921 Sps (651 points from his averages and 270 bonus points).

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

lls good

h squad that captured the SEA- ampionship in Lucena last year. Fresh Technology is a unique robial system which does not ne treated surface and does ct the normal skin bacteria, se rashes or skin irritations. since I converted to Burling- Fresh, I'm no longer insecure have to expose my feet because ell heavenly," said Trina, a of her college's varsity team. "I nd the court all day and come put my feet up while I unwind of the TV without worry."

Konica Minolta National pro-am fires off Feb. 7

THE FIFTH KONICA MINOLTA NATIONAL pro-am, the country's only one-ball twosome tournament, fires off Feb. 7-11 at the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

The executive committee, through co-chair U-Bix Corp. president Edilberto Bravo and National Golf Association of the Philippines president Benny Gopez, finalized the dates during a recent meeting at the Grappa's Ristorante in Makati City.

Bravo is credited for reviving the event that began in 1958, then known as the Fort Bonifacio pro-am, to give an additional competition for the pros and amateurs.

Before the meeting at Grappa's, Bravo sealed the deal with Konica Minolta group manager Moriichi Miyazaki, who agreed to be the title sponsor together with U-Bix Corp. as tournament presenter.

A total of P1.7 million in prizes is at stake according to organizing committee chair and Riviera Golf president Commodore (ret) Danny Pizarro.

Joining Pizarro in the organizing committee are Rodolfo Feliciano, Taby Tabaniag, Eric Gozo, Jake Ayson, Christine Lee Altavas, Tony Sisante, Henry Arebalo, Roger Flores, Buddy Resurreccion and Al Mendoza as members.

MAMIIT CLINIC: Young netters get tips from SEAG gold medalist Cecil Mamiit (2nd from right) during a clinic organized by SEAG tennis team manager Jean Henri Lhuillier at the Manila Polo Club and PCA.

SJC hosts NCA Int'l derby

ONE OF THE BIGGEST AND TOUghest international cockfight derbies in the world will be held at the world-class and fully air-conditioned San Juan Coliseum in San Juan, Metro Manila, on Jan. 16, 18 and 20.

This is the first of two National Cockers Association organized International 8-cock derbies next year. The second is set in June.

Preceding the NCA International will be a 7-cock derby on Jan. 9 and 11, to be hosted by the Sundance group of Danny Valero and Phil Say. It's the third of an NCA series; the first two were held last Dec. 12 and 14 and Dec. 19 and 21.

The defending champions of the NCA International are the Joe Wolcott-Firefly Group combine and partners Boy Marzo and Rod Barro of Dubai. But NCA stalwarts Rudy Albano and Patrick Antonio, who vowed to field their best warriors, are confident they will wrest the championship.

Other NCA "tough customers" like Claude Bautista (who won the NCA second leg derby on Dec. 19 and 21) and Fil -Am George Torres hinting at their own "secret weapon" to wrest the title.

SPORTSWATCH

On-line Care Executive Chess finals set

ALL IS SET FOR THE FINAL SHOWDOWN OF THE 2005 ON-LINE CARE INTERnational Executive chess championship to be held on Jan. 7 and 8 at the 4th Floor of Pearl Billiard Leisure Center, Pearl Plaza Mall, Quirino Avenue, Parañaque City. The Group A Finalists are FM Rico Salimbagat, Ed Sumergido, NM Randy Sagarra, NM Dante Zuñiga, NM Roberto Arellano, Clements Valledor, Noel Garcia, Arnel Anton, Dr. Jenny Mayor, Willy Abalos, NM Efren Bagamasbad and Dennis San Juan. The Group B Finalists are Adler Enriquez, Edwin Tuquia, Leoncio Maulion, Gary Baltar, Xavier Busig, Verth Alora, Jesurie Calabia, Rolando Angozo, Francis Geriane, Carlo de Leon 11, Lourescel Hernandez and Orly Pascual. Contact Francis Geriane at 541-5761, 0916-9118449 or NM Efren Bagamasbad 0910-8089996, Boyet Tardecilla 0921-5307050 or Dr. Jenny Mayor 704-9775.

6th Ilusorio Cup starts today

BAGUIO CITY—THE 6TH NANOY ILUSORIO CUP FIRES OFF TODAY AT THE short and challenging par-61 course of the Baguio Country Club. What sets apart the Ilusorio Cup from the rest is the presence of a butler in every hole, who, in turn, will be offering free flowing champagne to the expected 200 participants of the annual tournament. The event is held every yearend in honor of club chair emeritus Potenciano "Nanoy" Ilusorio. Wilson Sports, Dunlop Slazenger Group, Prudential Guarantee, EcoGreen, Werdenberg International, San Miguel Corp., RizGolf, BPI, Philam-Life, Euro-Swiss, Barrington Carpets and Will Decena and Associates are the sponsors.

Provincial bets advance in jr netfest

MACY SOLON OF DUMAGUETE CITY OUSTED JOY ALTICHE 6-0, 6-1, AND KRIStel Buenacosa of Cebu edged Megan Maquera, 6-1, 6-4, as the provincial entries continued their winning run yesterday in the yearend 2005 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Philam Homes Tennis Club in Quezon City. Solon takes on Zhane Quitara, a 6-1, 6-1 victor past Nadine Castillo for the girls' 16-under division trophy; while Buenacosa meets Chynna Mamawal, who tripped Rachel Lucero, 6-3, 6-2, for the girls' 14-under jewel. Tim Polero blanked Ivan Adato, 6-0, 6-0, and twin brother Kim whitewashed Aldrick Olivan, 6-0, 6-0, in the boys' 12-under division berth of the event organized by the CTW and supported by Adidas with Philta sanction. JV Custodio nipped Joanna Peña 6-4, 1-6, 10-8 to lead the semifinalists in the girls' 12-under event with Louise Lopez, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Marinelle Rudas; Micah Tampoco, who routed Samantha Coyuito 6-3, 6-0; Megan Real.

5th Enduro Cross at Timberland Heights

SAN MATEO, RIZAL—THE FINAL RACE OF THE 5TH ENDURO CROSS ROARS OFF today at Timberland Heights, Sports and Nature Club in San Mateo, Rizal, near Batasan Road, Quezon City. This year's finale will use a Le Mans-style start. The different categories are pro open, novice, beginner production, executive open, 35-year-old-and-above, local Enduro A and B, and the 45-year-old and above. Registration and practice run start at 7 a.m. Interested riders can call Racewurx's Allan Ayuson for info at 0915-4026625/0918-3715443 or e-mail at kp5@pldtdsl.net./kinetic_production@yahoo.com. The event is sponsored by Filinvest Land Inc., W.L. Foods, Shell Advance Motor Oils, Norkis Yamaha, Outdrive Engine Energizer, RC Cola, Otto Shoes, ITTI-Caterpillar, Country Waffles, Reyes Haircutters, Oakley, Chel-sea Direct Sales, Nivea Sun, Hawk Bags, Sunbolt Sports Drink, Aqua Soft, Access Plus, Dan's Bike Shop, JBS, JMS, YRS, Shell-Mocha Blends, Networx, Sheeha Money Changer, Oggie Doggie Hotdogs, Triplex, Rebisco and Composite Tech Inc. with Speed, Sports TV, BYK 101, Sports Unlimited and Insider Racing Magazine as media partners.

Pasay 3-cocker slates 60 fights

THE LAST COCKFIGHTING DERBY FOR 2005 IS SCHEDULED TODAY AT THE FULly air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit, a 3-cock event that will feature more than 60 fights and will be sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Hosts of the event are Cito Manansala and Gerry Maningas. Entry fee is P5,500. Pit managers Eric dela Rosa, Butchoy Olano and Roming Vergara have also invited several members from the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA). Likewise, Dela Rosa expressed his gratitude to loyal followers of Pasay City Cockpit which is known as the most popular cockpit in Metro Manila. Meanwhile, a bigtime 4-cock derby set on Jan. 6, with the Ika Mae group as hosts, will be PCC's first derby for 2006. For inquiries, contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

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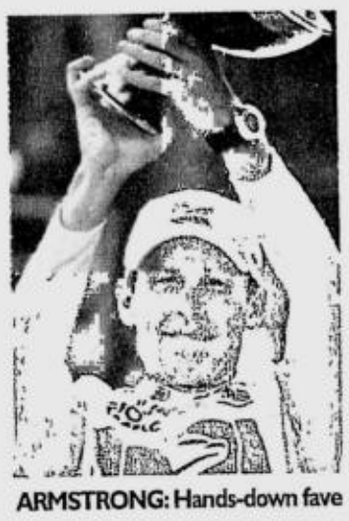
SPORTS

Armstrong wins 4th Male Athlete of the Year title

AUSTIN, Texas—Lance Armstrong, who won his seventh consecutive Tour de France, was honored as The Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year for the fourth straight year on Wednesday.

He is the only athlete to be selected by US sportswriters four times since the honor first was awarded in 1931.



ARMSTRONG: Hands-down fave

Armstrong received 30 of the 83 votes cast. US college gridiron football running back Reggie Bush of the University of Southern California was second with 23 votes, and Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning was third with eight, followed by tennis star Roger Federer and golf's Tiger Woods with seven each.

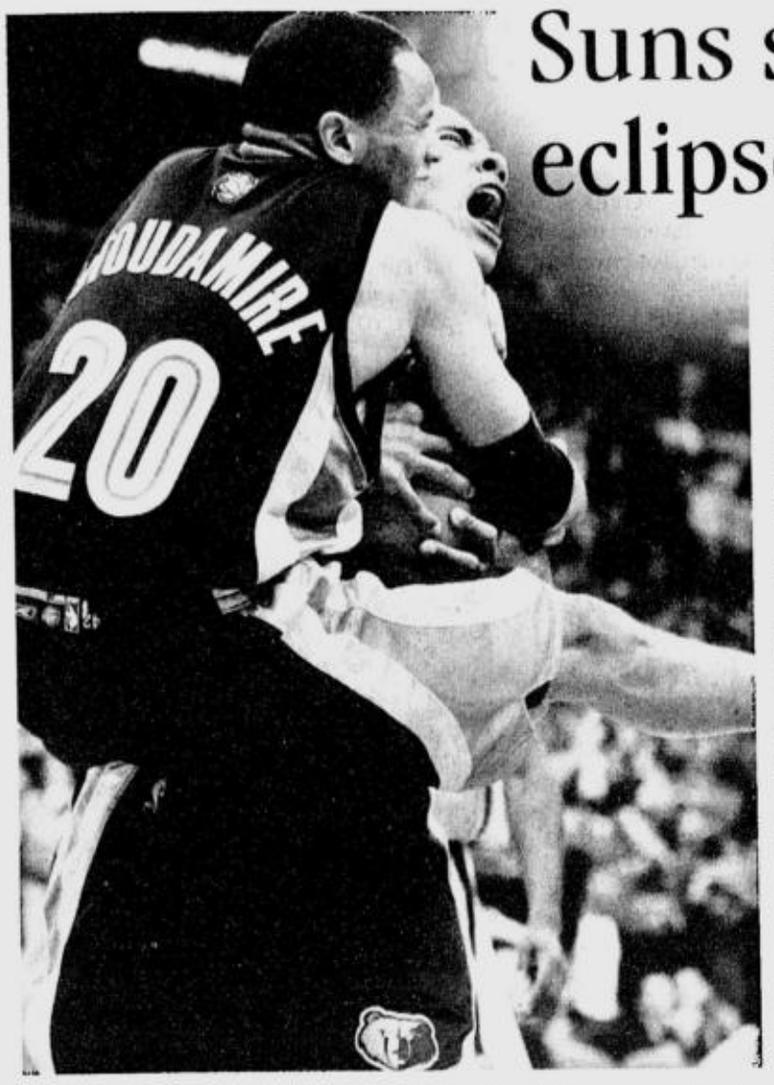
"It's nice to win," Armstrong said. "I'll never win again.

The 34-year-old Armstrong retired after deciding there were no more mountains to conquer on his bike.

"I may have to take up golf," he said. "Take on Tiger."

Also Wednesday, Annika Sorenstam was selected as the AP Female Athlete of the Year.

Armstrong calls his 2005 season "a dream." His final Tour was another dominant performance—he won by the comfortable margin of 4 minutes, 40 seconds. Stepping off the winner's podium for the final time, his goal was to kick back "with a beer, having a blast" and play with his three young children from his first marriage. *AP*



MEMPHIS' Damon Stoudamire (left) jumps into the arms of Dahntay Jones after the Grizzlies' 100-99 overtime win over the Los Angeles Lakers Wednesday. AP

Suns shine anew, eclipse Wizards

NEW YORK—SHAWN MARION SCORED 28 points while Steve Nash helped out with 19 points and 16 assists as the Phoenix Suns rallied past the Washington Wizards, 104-99, in the US capital on Wednesday.

James Jones contributed 16 points and seven boards to the Phoenix total and Raja Bell chipped in with 13 points for the Suns, who picked up their second consecutive win and fourth in six games.

Caron Butler paced the Wizards with 22 points and Antawn Jamison had 19.

Trailing by eight midway through the final quarter, the Suns slowly chipped away at the Wizards' advantage, finally nosing in front at 100-99 with just over a minute to play.

A dunk by Marion gave the Suns a three-point cushion and Nash nailed two from the free-throw line to close out the scoring.

In Oklahoma City, David West drained a jump shot with one second left to lift the New Orleans Hornets to a 92-90 victory over the Houston Rockets.

J.R. Smith led New Orleans with 16 points. *Reuters*

SOLAR Sports will air the Seattle-Denver tussle at 11:30 a.m.

COMPLETE RESULTS:

Toronto 108, Atlanta 102; Orlando 105, NY Knicks 95; Phoenix 104, Washington 99; Charlotte 93, Chicago 80; N.O./Oklahoma city, 92 Houston 90; Minnesota 108, Seattle 95; Portland 95, Philadelphia 91; Golden State 111, Boston 109; Memphis 100, LA Lakers 99 (OT)

Sorenstam makes it three in a row

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA—ANNIKA Sorenstam, who became the first woman in 19 years to capture the first two legs of the Grand Slam and won 10 times on the US LPGA Tour, won the AP Female Athlete of the Year on Wednesday, making Sorenstam the first golfer since Zaharias (1945-47) to win the award three straight years.

"I am flattered and honored to be chosen by so many different editors," said Sorenstam, who received 47 of 81 votes cast by US AP newspaper and broadcast members.

Danica Patrick, the rookie race car driver whose fourth-place finish at the Indianapolis 500 was the best ever by a female, received 17 votes. Maria Sharapova got five votes for becoming the first Russian-born tennis player to reach No. 1, while Wimbledon champ Venus Williams and 16-year-old golfer Michelle Wie each got four votes.

Lance Armstrong was voted Male Athlete of the Year for the fourth straight year.

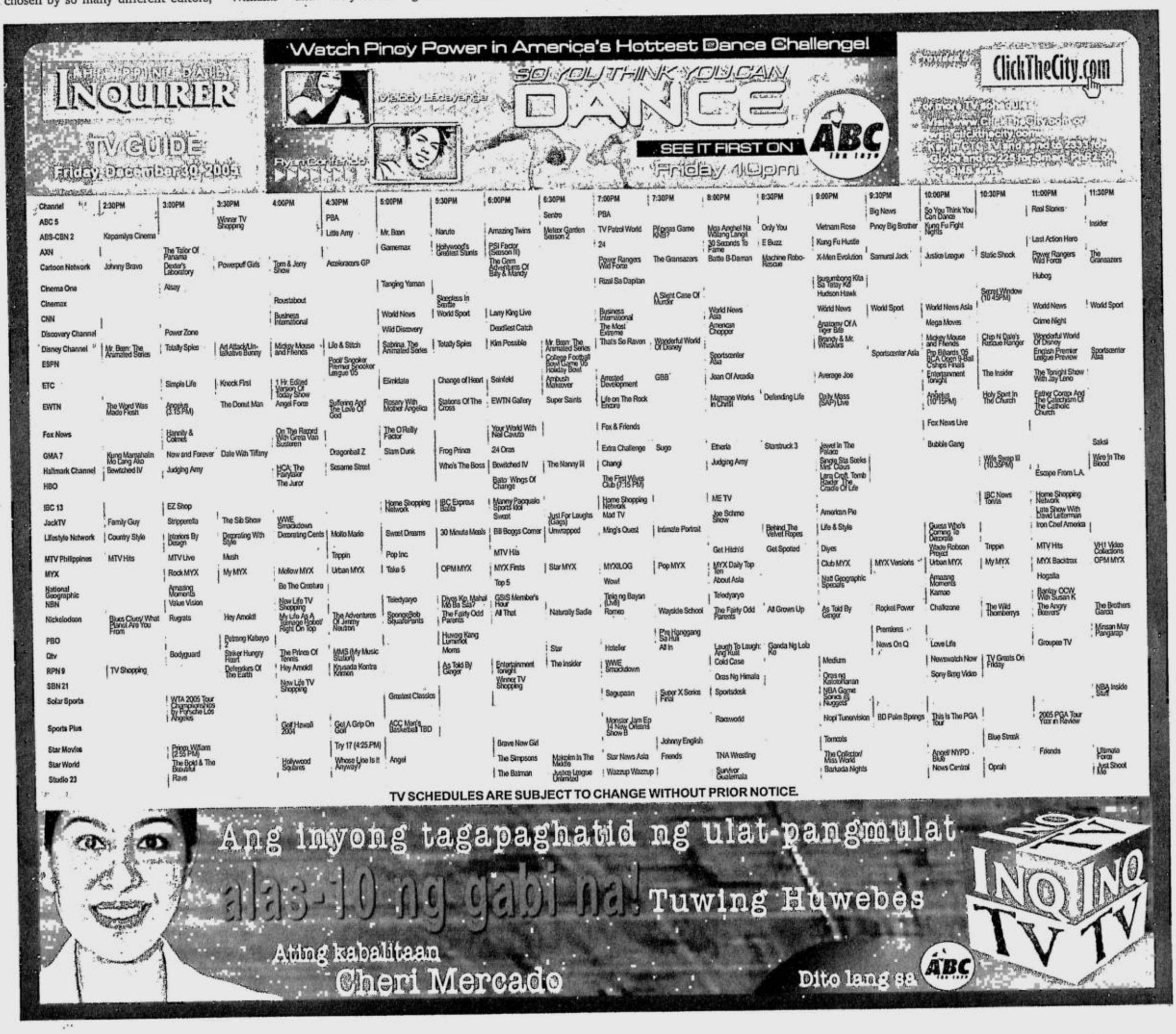
Zaharias won the AP Female Athlete award six times in her career, one of those years in athletics. As badly as Sorenstam has beaten up on her competition this decade, maybe it's time for her to try another sport.

"When Annika comes to play, Annika comes to win," Lorie Kane said.

Before she played in her first tournament this year, Sorenstam filed for divorce from her husband of eight years, a distraction that lingered until it was finalized in August. But she found refuge inside the ropes, adding a few more tournaments than usual, and winning at an alarming rate.

"Golf has been my savior, there's no doubt about that," she said. *AP*

SORENSTAM: 47 of 81 votes. AP



ENTERTAINMENT
Editor Emmie G. Velarde
Text us your feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

VIC Sotto with "Enteng" co-stars Kristine Hermosa and Oyo Boy during the festival parade. RAFFY LERMA

Competitors, not enemies

Vic says it's natural for GMA 7 to protect 'Mulawin' vs 'Enteng'

By Marinel R. Cruz

TELEVISION AND PRODUCTION Exponents, Inc. (Tape), producer of "Eat Bulaga!", has a policy that prohibits artists from promoting their movies on the program if these projects are in conflict with a film that the outfit is supporting."

This is according to "Eat... Bulaga!" host Vic Sotto, who reportedly figured in a "rift" between M-Zet Films, producer of his Metro Manila Film Festival starrer, "Enteng Kabisote 2: Okay Ka Fairy Ko the Legend Continues," and GMA Films, producer of "Mulawin The Movie," also a festival entry.

"Eat... Bulaga!" is the longest running noontime show on GMA 7. Sotto owns M-Zet Films but says he has no stakes in Tape.

Binding policy

"The policy is especially binding when it concerns artists of movies with themes similar to any project that Tape is promoting," Sotto told INQUIRER Entertainment on Wednesday.

"Mulawin" and "Enteng Kabisote 2" are both fantasy films.

GMA 7 president Felipe Gozon reportedly asked Sotto earlier not to join this year's festival because "Enteng" was deemed a force to contend with at the box office. In fact, it has been declared the top-grosser on Christmas Day, when seven of 10 MMFF entries opened nationwide (the remaining three open on Jan. 1). Imus Productions' "Tales of the Enchanted Kingdom: Exodus," starring Ramon "Bong" Revilla, was in second place, and "Mulawin" took the third post.

It was reported that cast members of "Mulawin" were banned from promoting the movie on "Eat... Bulaga!" and that placements of ads for "Enteng" were not allowed on other GMA 7 shows.

"It's only natural for the network to protect its movie," Sotto pointed out. "But it's not true that Mr. Gozon tried to convince me to back out. *Walang tampuhan. Magkalaban kami, pero hindi naman magkaaway* (We're festival competitors but not enemies)."

Sotto added: "If you watch our program regularly, you'll see that we air plugs of 'Mulawin' and (Regal Entertainment's) 'Blue Moon' (another MMFF entry). *Pwede naman namin tanggihan*, but we said yes for the sake of friendship."

In any case, Sotto confirmed that Gozon and Tape president Tony Tuviera met early this month to discuss the issue. "They talked about placements of 'Mulawin' plugs in 'Eat... Bulaga!' break spots owned by GMA 7," he said.

Sotto added that M-Zet placed no ads on other GMA 7 shows and merely used free airtime on "Eat... Bulaga!" plus "bonus spots" on "Daddy Di Do Du," another Tape production. "*Nagtitipid ako* (I didn't want to spend)," he said. "In fairness to GMA 7, our movie was promoted on '24 Oras' and 'S-Files.'

Heavy ad load

GMA Films president Annette Gozon-Abrogar told INQUIRER Entertainment in an earlier interview that plugs for MMFF entries on GMA 7 shows have generally been minimal because the station's commercial load "is at its heaviest these days." Meaning, "Enteng" had not been singled out, as rumors implied.

Meanwhile, Sotto is "very pleased" with his current movie's performance. His starrers have been MMFF's top grossers in the last three years. He said "Enteng Kabisote 1" earned P11.8 million in Metro Manila on its opening day last year and that "Enteng Kabisote 2" made P12.4 million in Metro Manila on Christmas Day.

"With all the financial and political problems that the country is facing, I guess Filipinos just want to be entertained during Christmas time," Sotto said.

What the stars said this past year

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

HERE ARE SOME QUOTABLE QUOTES Dollywood gathered from celebrities in 2005. More in my next column. Happy Happening NEWsy New Year, "Dollywooders!" Merci beaucoup for making this column PDI's consistent #1 (Modesty aside... That's documented in inq7.net's weekly survey.)

Dennis Trillo

As much as possible it would be better if my girlfriend is not a celebrity. But if she happens to be one and she's even more popular than I am, I won't mind. I can handle that.

Assunta de Rossi

Just because my husband and I are not seen together in some functions, that doesn't mean we are separated. He has his world and I have mine. But we have our own world when we are at home.

Nina

I can live without a boyfriend but not without music.

Vicki Belo

When you get tangled up in problems, just be still and let God untangle the knot. That's what I do when I'm thrust into all sorts of controversies.

Michael Bublé

I've seen how music can transcend borders and boundaries, cultures and creeds. It's been an education, but more importantly, it's been an inspiration.

Gretchen Barretto

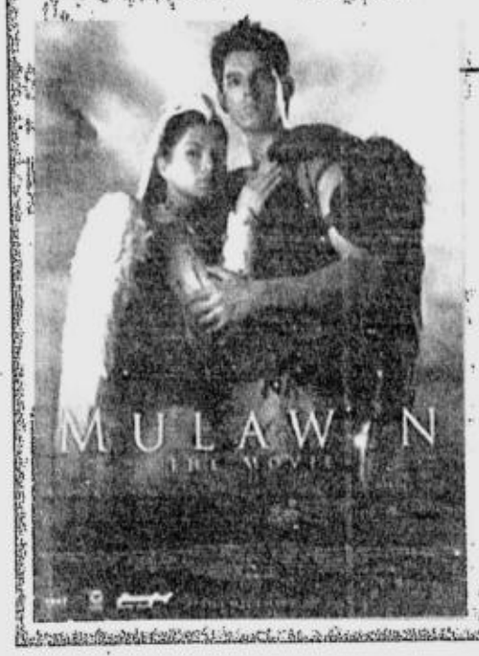
It's sad when people make up sto-

TITLE/ A2-2

ASSUNTA has her own world with Jules.

GRETCHEN fights when she's right.

ONE LAST BATTLE. IN THE NAME OF LOVE.



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KUTOB PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10	MULAWIN GP 12:20,2:50,5:30, 7:50,10:15	AKO LEGAL WIFE: MANO PO 4 PG13 12:30,2:50,5:10, 7:30,10:00
ENTENG KABISOTE: THE LEGEND CONTINUES GP 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10	SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K4 PG13 12:45,3:05,5:25, 7:45,10:05	EXODUS: TALES FROM THE ENCHANTED KINGDOM GP 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL: 896-1404

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2 — MTRCB GP — 12.20, 2.45, 5.10, 7:35, 10:00
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE — MTRCB. GP — 12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7:30, 10.00
3 AKO LEGAL WIFE — MTRCB PG-13 — 12.20, 2:45, 5.10, 7:35, 10:00
4 EXODUS — MTRCB. GP — 11.40, 2.10, 4.40, 7:10, 9.40

PREMIERE THEATRE (CLOSED)

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1 (DOLBY) ENTENG KABISOTE 2 GP
2 (DOLBY) MULAWIN THE MOVIE GP
3 (DOLBY) AKO LEGAL WIFE P13
4 (DOLBY) EXODUS GP

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(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

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2 (SDDS) MULAWIN
3 (DTS) ENTENG KABISOTE -2
4 GOLD (DTS) SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
5 GOLD (DOLBY) MULAWIN
6 GOLD (SDDS) KUTOB
7 GOLD (DOLBY) EXODUS
8 (DOLBY STEREO) SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
9 (DOLBY STEREO) ENTENG KABISOTE -2
10 (DOLBY STEREO) AKO LEGAL WIFE

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2 (DOLBY) ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 (DOLBY) EXODUS
4 (DOLBY) KUTOB

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2 EXODUS
3 KUTOB
4 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 (DOLBY) ENTENG KABISOTE -2
3 (DOLBY) SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
4 (DOLBY) EXODUS

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) EXODUS
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
3 ENTENG KABISOTE
4 TERRORIST HUNTER
5 MULAWIN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 MULAWIN
2 (DTS) ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DOLBY) EXODUS
4 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
2 (DOLBY) EXODUS
3 (DTS) ENTENG KABISOTE
4 MULAWIN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ENTENG KABISOTE
2 MULAWIN
3 (DOLBY) EXODUS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DOLBY) EXODUS
4 (DTS) MULAWIN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 EXODUS
2 MULAWIN
3 (DOLBY) ENTENG KABISOTE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan)
1 EXODUS
2 ENTENG KABISOTE

Starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 EXODUS
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE

MARILYN MAL
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ENTENG KABISOTE
2 MULAWIN
3 TERRORIST HUNTER
4 KUTOB

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 MULAWIN
2 TERRORIST HUNTER
3 KUTOB

Center Mall Cinema
Bagulo Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Bagulo City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
2 EXODUS

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 MULAWIN
3 KUTOB
4 (DDS) EXODUST

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) EXODUST
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DTS) MULAWIN
4 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
5 ENTENG KABISOTE

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 6433994
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE -2
3 TERRORIST HUNTER
4 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) MULAWIN
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
3 (DTS EX) ENTENG KABISOTE
4 EXODUS

Cine Nepo (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 MULAWIN
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
3 (DOLBY) EXODUS
4 (DTS) ENTENG KABISOTE

Cine Nepo (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 MULAWIN
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
3 (DOLBY) EXODUS
4 (DTS) ENTENG KABISOTE

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 MULAWIN
4 EXODUST

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, Telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 MULAWIN
2 ENTENG KABISOTE -2
3 EXODUS

Cinemagic Pacific Mall (Lucena City) tel. 6605271
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE -2
3 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
4 MULAWIN

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MULAWIN
2 EXODUS

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 TERRORIST HUNTER
2 ENTENG KABISOTE

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
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CINEMA 1 — KUTOB PG13 — 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50
CINEMA 2 — ENTENG KABISOTE 2-GP — 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

PROMENADE

CINEMA 3 — MULAWIN GP — 10:40, 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20
CINEMA 4 — AKO LEGAL WIFE PG13 — 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50
CINEMA 5 — EXODUS-PG13 — 10:40, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

TICKETS & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES CALL 722-4796

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February 3 & 4 — NINA & NYOY — 9PM
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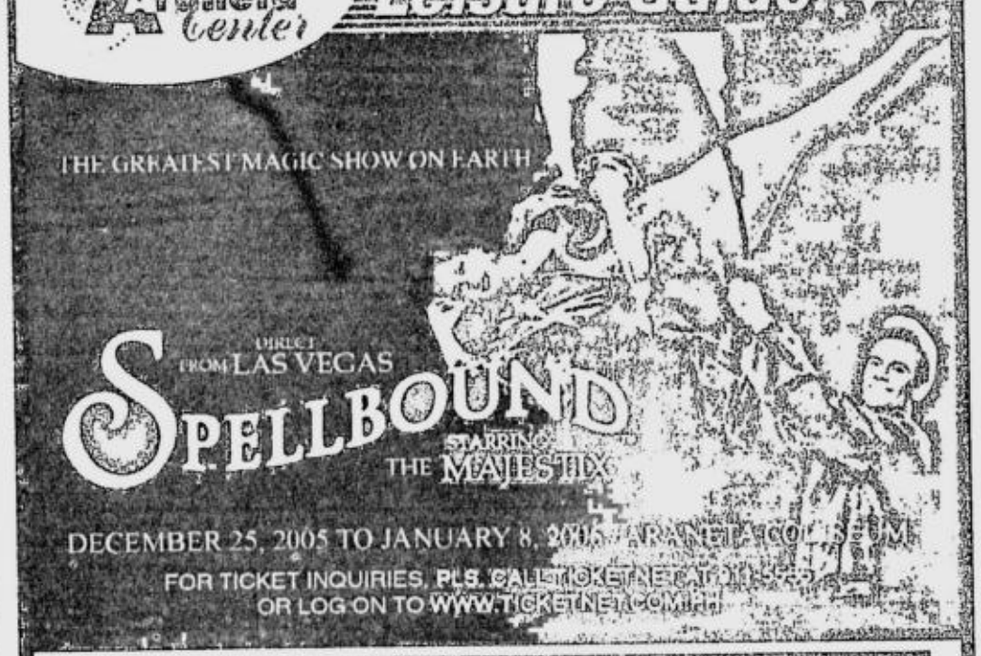
Araneta Center Leisure Guide



CINEMA SCHEDULES

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DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

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EXODUS — 12:20 / 1:10 / 2:40 / 3:30 / 5:00 / 5:50 / 7:20 / 8:10 / 9:40
SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL — 11:40 / 1:35 / 2:10 / 4:05 / 4:40 / 6:35 / 7:10 / 9:05 / 9:40
MULAWIN — 11:40 / 2:10 / 4:40 / 7:10 / 9:40
ENTENG KABISOTE 2 — 11:35 / 1:30 / 2:05 / 4:00 / 4:35 / 6:30 / 7:05 / 9:00 / 9:35

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
EXODUS — 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
AKO, LEGAL WIFE — 11:10 / 1:20 / 3:30 / 5:40 / 7:50 / 10:00
KUTOB — 12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 9:50

ALI MALL CINEMAS
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2 — 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00
2 MULAWIN — 12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05
3 KUTOB — 11:40 / 1:55 / 4:10 / 6:25 / 8:40
4 TERRORIST HUNTER — 12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE — 12:15 / 2:25 / 4:35 / 6:45 / 8:55

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
SPELLBOUND MAGIC SHOW — Dec. 30 Fri. - Showtime 2 pm & 6 pm
WORLD SLASHER CUP — January 17, 19 & 21

CENTER EVENTS
NEW STORES — Tapa King at Shopwise Arcade, Max's Restaurant at the Upper Ground Floor of All Mall; HBC at the 2nd Floor of Farmers Plaza
SALE — Araneta Center Year-End Centerwide Sale ongoing until Jan. 1, 2006; up to 50% off on great selections at Gateway Mall, Farmers Plaza & Ali Mall

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.com FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO BUY ...

A2

What the

RUFA Mae inspired by her fans.

JOLINA gives her all.

VICKI trusts God.

ries about me. I'd rather keep quiet. But when I'm provoked and I know I'm right, I fight.

Aga Muhlach

All-praises *ako kay* **John Lloyd Cruz.** All newcomers should be like him. *Binibigyan niya ng pansin ang pag-arte. Di siya nag-iinarte!* I have my own path. John Lloyd has his road to follow. Even when I turn 50, I will still be **Aga Muhlach.**

Jolina Magdangal

They usually say that, when you love, you should leave something for yourself so that you won't get hurt. I don't believe in that. When I love I give it my all. What's the point of loving if you hold back? I'm lucky that my boyfriend **Bebong** and I share the same sentiments. That's why, even if it's a long-distance romance, we don't have any problems.

Ruffa Mae Quinto

I don't feel like a *diyosa* even if so many guys are linked to me. I try to look good for my fans. They are my real inspiration.

Ogie Alcasid

I'm celibate when I'm not with my wife. I have a lot of girl friends who help me through the lonely nights but I know my limits. I remain loyal to my wife. Just because I have songs about forbidden love doesn't mean that I'm into that.

Janice de Belen

I don't believe what some celebrities say that as public personalities, we lose our privacy. It all depends on how much you'll let the public into your life. There are some aspects you can still keep to yourself. It's just that some stars really are publicity-hungry and thrive on controversies.

Marvin Agustin

I just do my work. I'm not conscious of the ratings game. As an actor, that's too much for me to worry about. It will just take away my focus from the job.

Mark Anthony Fernandez

My dad always reminds me that to every action there's an equal and opposite reaction. After going through rehab twice, I value my dad's words of wisdom even more.

Albert Martinez

It would break my heart if my kids someday blamed me for whatever miseries they would experience. I don't understand how some people think it's their parents who made their lives miserable. Parents can only do so much. It all boils down to the choices one makes in life.

Paolo Bediones

I'm not bothered by the entry of younger and better-looking TV hosts. What matters in this job is sincerity. The audience can see through you.

* * *

FLASH! Spotted **Paolo Contis** and **Isabel Oli** oh, so sweet at Metrowalk. Were they just keeping each other warm (hot?) on that cold December evening?

* * *

DID YOU KNOW? The costume of **Benjie Paras'** character "Tay-ho" in "Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom: Exodus" was designed and created by London-trained special effects experts **Benny** and **Liz Batoctoy**. The costume alone cost roughly P500,000 and additional prosthetics amounted to about P100,000.

The movie's theatrical rights were already sold in Macau, China and Hong Kong, months before its cinema release.

'Island flavors'

WATCHING Island Flavors on Christmas Day made me want to go to Tiendesitas and give myself and my family the gift of exquisite food. Delicacies all over the Philippines can be found there.

I salivated as I watched Chef **Gigi Angkaw** make an excellent Italian Feast with Century Tuna Lasagna Primavera, 555 Fried Sardine and Pesto Pizza and the mouth-watering Black Forest Trifle. These recipes would really come in handy for you to prepare all throughout the new year.

stars said this past year

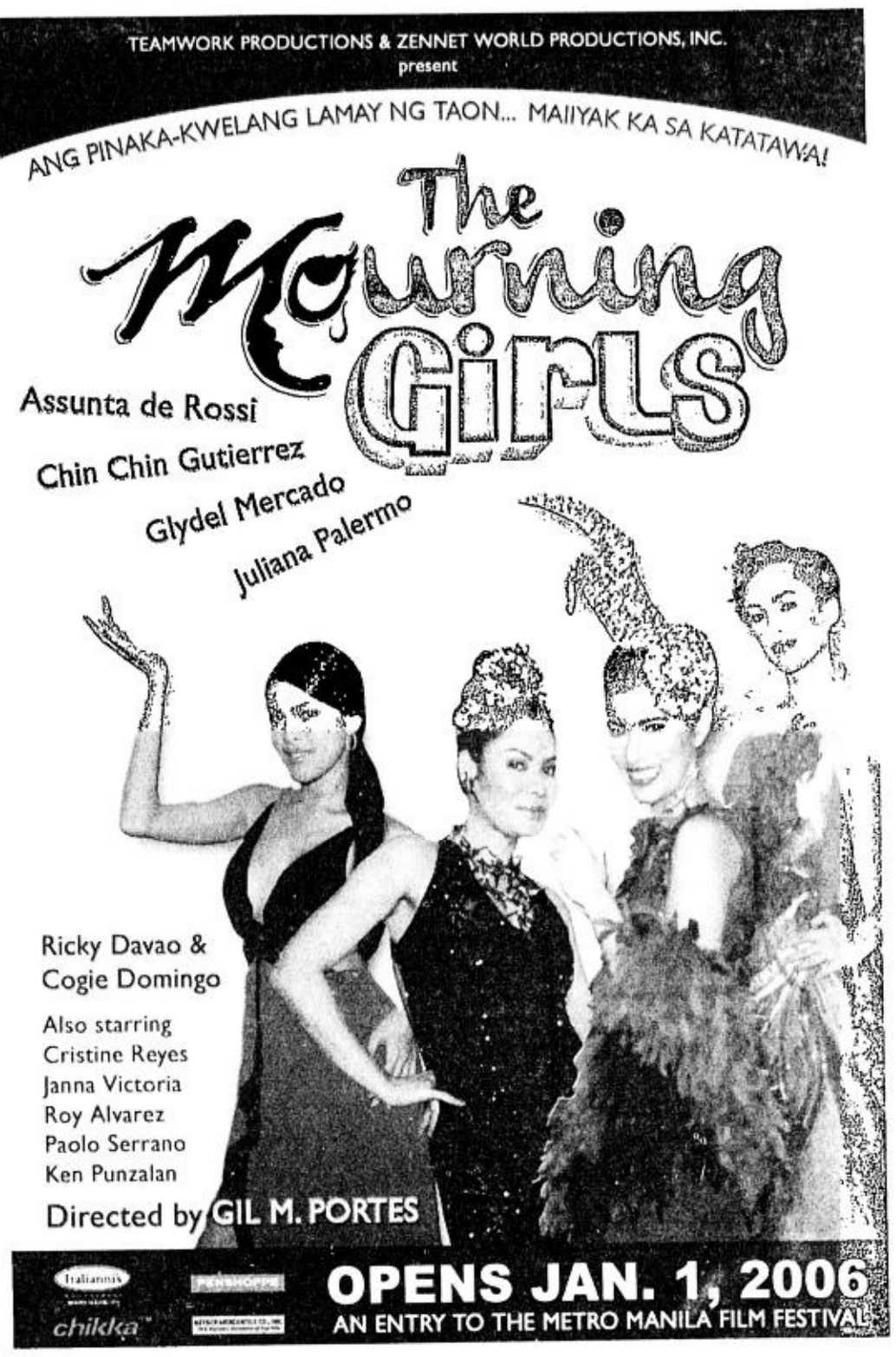
From page A2-1

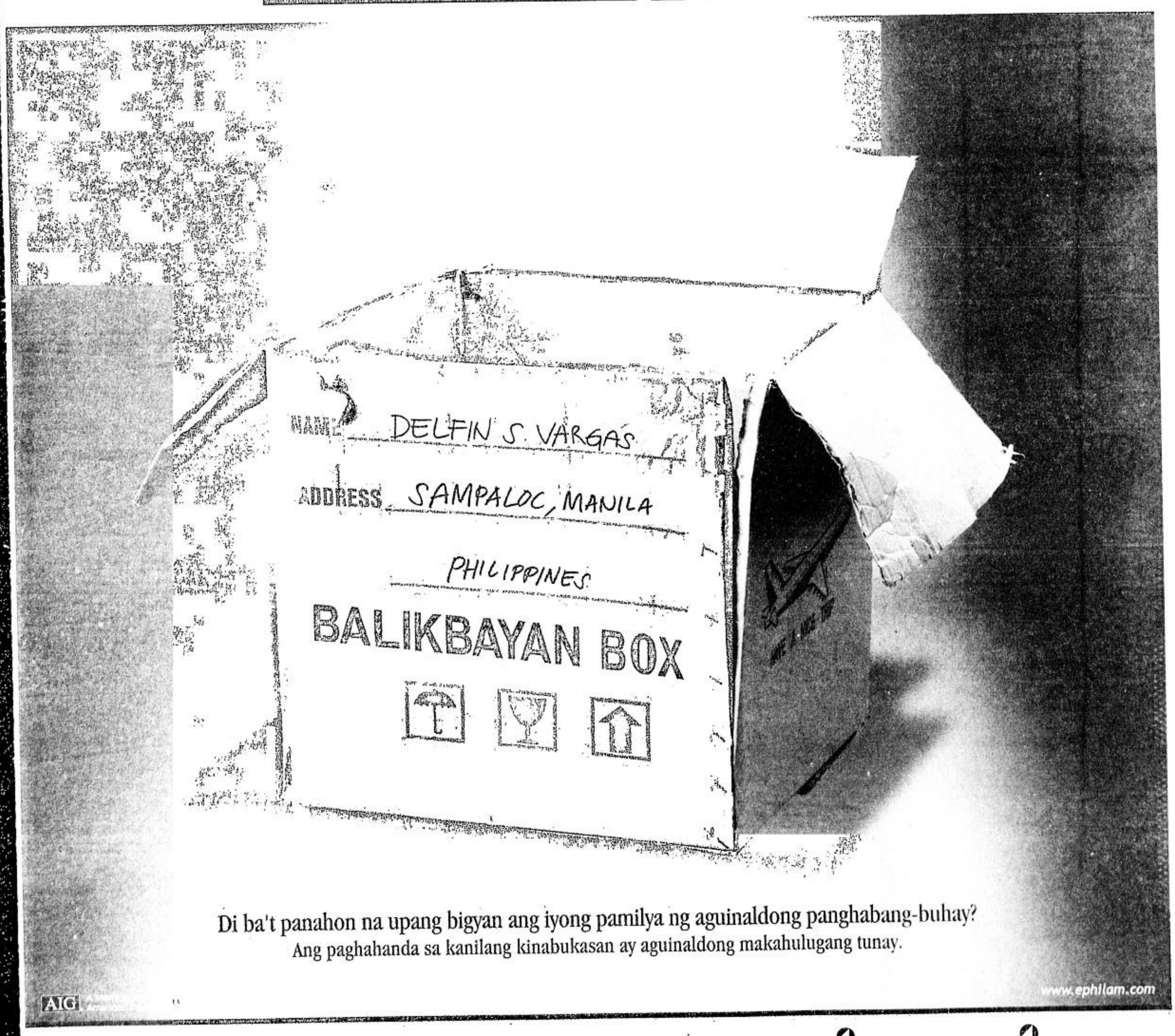
AGA Muhlach all praise for John Lloyd Cruz.

OGIE Alcasid is "celibate" when wife's away.

Watch "Island Flavors" as the team from Scribbleworks Productions serve up more delicacies from all over the Philippines. Sundays, 9:30 a.m. on ABC 5.

(Email wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com)





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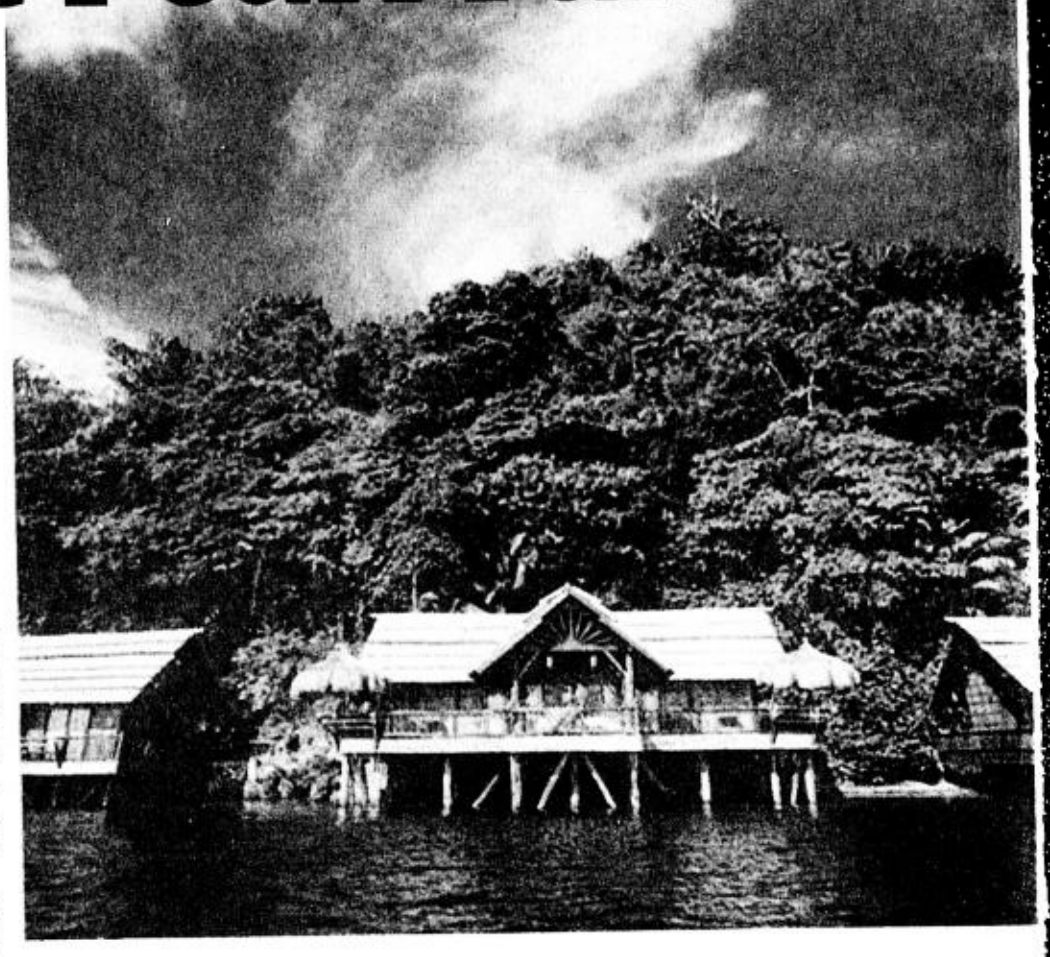
Asean ministers meet at Pearl Farm



THE CITY OF DAVAO IS READY TO HOST THE Asean Tourism Forum (ATF) 2006. The Asean Region's premier travel trade event has been officially handed over to the Philippines and is slated on the 13th - 21st of January 2006. Fourteen properties have been designated as official hotels for ATF 2006, one of which is the beautiful Pearl Farm Beach Resort in Samal Island.

The world-renowned Pearl Farm Beach Resort is eager and proud to host the meetings and several press conferences of Tourism Ministers coming from Asian countries of Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore and others, as well as the people behind the National Tourism Organizations and have as guests at the resort the Asean governmental delegations. Like the rest of Davao, the resort has prepared for the upcoming event and has renovated its "icon", the Parola, as well as the Samal Houses, and has completed the new Malipano Pavilion for functions that can accommodate up to 200 persons. Nestled on the quiet side of Samal Island in the Philippines, the Pearl Farm Beach Resort is a mere 45-minute boat ride from the wharf in the main island of Davao City. Once a pearl farm, this 14-hectare spread is a luxurious haven with 73 Maranao and Samal influence-designed deluxe rooms, suites and cottages perched on stilts above the sea; infinity pools and other fun facilities and amenities.

Guests can start their day with a scrumptious breakfast buffet at the Maranao Restaurant which features delicious Filipino and International cuisine with fresh seafood specialties. The Ylang Ylang Spa is a certifiably unique spa experience using health and beauty products made out of the most natural of ingredients. Guests may opt to avail of massage services at the spa, surrounded by trees and thick foliage or in the comfort of their own rooms. The resort has badminton/tennis/basketball courts available and a panorama of water sports activities is also accessible. Guests may arrange diving or snorkeling adventures as well as hopping around the neighboring islands of Samal. The waters around Pearl Farm have been declared a marine sanctuary as it protects not only abundant marine life but also two sunken World War II Japanese Vessels.

Pearl Farm Beach Resort has been a Kalakbay "Best Resort of the Year" awardee for two consecutive years. Fuego Hotels & Properties manages Pearl Farm Beach Resort and the breathtaking Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City. Both Taal Vista Hotel & Pearl Farm Beach Resort are participating in the Travel Exchange wherein they will meet with travel agents and tour operators from all over the world. Fuego Hotels also operates the exclusive and upscale Club Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Batangas. For inquiries and reservations call Fuego Hotels at (02) 750.1999 or visit our website at www.fuegohotels.com or email guests@fuegohotels.com. For more information on the ATF 2006 log on to www.atf2006.com.

Dazzling December at City Garden Hotel Makati

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, LET CITY GARDEN Hotel Makati offer you wonderful treats.

A great way to spend a relaxing day or a long weekend with your loved ones, City Garden Hotel's tastefully elegant guest rooms come for as low as P1,450 per person on twin-sharing basis inclusive of a choice of free sumptuous buffet breakfast for two or a Spa service at the hotel's Body & Face by Mendez, free use of its open-air swimming pool at the Roofdeck and its fully equipped Gym at the Penthouse. Two (2) children below 12 years of age, stay for free.

For those special get-togethers and reunions, its Party Package comes for as low as P24,750+ inclusive of buffet menu or barbecue grill and discounts on drinks. Its wedding and debut packages come for as low as P59,000+ inclusive of a buffet menu for 100 persons, a cake, souvenirs, floral arrangements, and other amenities. Thus, providing value for money and hassle-free arrangements. Reception venues may be held at its cozy, fully -equipped function rooms or at the al fresco Roofdeck, with a wonderfu l view of the metropolis.

For those one-on-one meetings, it has two restaurants that you can choose from. For this month, Le Jardin Restaurant, with its warm and relaxing dining experience, and its more popular Roofdeck Bar and Grill that gives you a cozy dining experience with a great view of the Makati skyline, is offering its Chef's Special of "Ribs BBQ & Grills". Enjoy mouth-watering steaks, ribs and lamb chops garnished with corn on a cob, grilled onions, tomato and aubergine.

For those planning its Christmas Party, City Garden Hotel's packages comes complete with a buffet meal of either Fiesta Filipino, Western, Continental, Fisherman's Fare or its signature, City Garden Menu for as low as P35,000+, it already includes use of a function room, basic décor, dance floor and discount on drinks.

Those needing extra pampering, the Body & Face by Mendez at the hotel's Upper Penthouse level has special packages for individuals, couples or group.

Accessibility is also not a problem as the hotel is just five minutes from the Rockwell and Glorietta malls and the Makati Comm ercial and

Business District. As an added amenity, the hotel is offering free scheduled shuttle service to the Makati CBD.

City Garden Hotel Makati is located in Makati's restaurant strip at 7870 Makati Avenue corner Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City. For reservations or inquires, please call (02) 899-1111, or its domestic toll free number 1-800-101-GARDEN (427336), or at www.citygardenhotels.com .

Midnight countdown at Fiesta San Miguel

LET US TOAST THE YEAR 2006 at the coolest restaurant and bar where you can only find the best fresh brewed beer in town - Fiesta San Miguel!

Jive with the 'Unity Band' as they belt out their repertoire and welcome the New Year with a 'Midnight Countdown' on Dec. 31.

Have fun with your family and friends and drink fresh brewed beer all night for only P400 (consumable per person) plus free noisemakers.

Fiesta San Miguel is located at the ground floor of Dusit Hotel Nikko. For inquiries and reservations, contact 867-3333.

KIDDIE NEW YEAR PARTY AT THE BELLEVUE HOTEL

The Bellevue Hotel, the favorite family and business hotel at the south of Metro Manila, throws a New Year Kiddie Party on Dec. 31 at the hotel's Laguna Ballroom. A fun-filled night with face-painting, glimmer tattoos, yoyo master and magic shows, games, lootbags and prizes await excited kids as they greet the New Year with their parents, friends and playmates. Registration is at 7 p.m., tickets at P700nett for kids (below 12 years old), P500 for yayas and P1400 for adults. Not only that, guests participating in the Kiddie New Year Party can also go to The Flintstones Countdown Party at The Bellevue Grand Ballroom or vice versa! Per table reservations at the Grand Ballroom are available on a limited cash/credit basis only. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

Most fascinating interviews (Part 2)

JODIE Foster's favorite subject is parenthood.

LOS ANGELES—WE CONTINUE OUR list of 2005's most fascinating interview subjects. Part 1 came out on Wednesday, Dec. 28.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

Steven Spielberg

The filmmaker's cinematic portrayals of alien visitors spring from his belief that ETs do exist somewhere out there.

"I think we all know that we're not alone in the universe. I certainly can't imagine living without the belief that this universe is teeming with life. But I am a little less sure in my 50s than when I was in my late 20s whether we actually have been visited by aliens. Back in the days of 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind' in the 1970s—wow, was I convinced that we had been visited. And you know why I am not as convinced right now? Because of the millions of video cameras that are out there today that are picking up fewer photographs and videos of alleged UFOs than in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Now, why is that?"

Jodie Foster

Leave it to Jodie Foster, her features softening as she goes into her 40s, to give the best interview throughout our stay in Toronto for the film festival. This mother of two sounded most fascinating when she talked about parenthood.

"It's good that [my children] don't see themselves as privileged and that there are things they like that they can't have right away. They think we can't afford them. I don't want to say, no, no, no, we're very well off. I want them to learn that if you work hard, you can get what you want, that you're not going to be handed a Game Boy just because you can afford it."

Felicity Huffman

She had fun narrating how she does not get recognized in public, unlike her co-stars on "Des-

MOST/ A3-3

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1 AKO LEGAL WIFE 12:05, 2:35, 5:05, PG-13
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2 1:20, 3:45, 6:10 GP
3 EXODUS 12:35, 3:05, 5:35 GP
4 KUTOB 1:20, 3:45, 6:10 PG-13

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	4 EXODUS
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	3 THX MULAWIN GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 TERRORIST HUNTER	5 KUTOB	6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	7 EXODUS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX MULAWIN GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX TERRORIST HUNTER GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 KUTOB GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL GUARANTEED SEATS	5 EXODUS GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MULAWIN	2 TERRORIST HUNTER		
	3 KUTOB	4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	5 EXODUS	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	3 MULAWIN	4 TERRORIST HUNTER

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3	MULAWIN
4	ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5	AKO LEGAL WIFE

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GALLERIA (632-9116)

1 AKO LEGAL WIFE • THX 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	6 MULAWIN 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
2 EXODUS 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	7 TERRORIST HUNTER 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00	8 EXODUS 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30
4 KUTOB 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	9 ENTENG KABISOTE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00
5 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	10 MULAWIN 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30

ERMITA (536-7608 loc 12)

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	5 KUTOB 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
3 MULAWIN 10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:40 10:00	6 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:40 10:00
4 TERRORIST HUNTER 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30	7 EXODUS 10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:40 10:00

METRO EAST (662-8193 • 662-8199)

1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05	5 AKO LEGAL WIFE 10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05
2 EXODUS 2:15 4:35 6:55 9:15	6 TERRORIST HUNTER 2:15 4:35 6:55 9:15
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:20	7 KUTOB 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:20
4 MULAWIN 11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00	8 EXODUS 11:25 1:45 4:05 6:25 8:45

NOVALICHES (935-2241/935-2228 loc 31)

1 EXODUS
2 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
3 KUTOB
4 TERRORIST HUNTER
5 MULAWIN
6 ENTENG KABISOTE
7 AKO LEGAL WIFE
8 ENTENG KABISOTE

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1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 EXODUS	2 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
3 RESERVE	3 EXODUS
4 RESERVE	4 MULAWIN

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2 ENTENG KABISOTE	2 EXODUS
3 MULAWIN	3 ENTENG KABISOTE
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE	4 MULAWIN
5 EXODUS	5 EXODUS

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1 MULAWIN	1 KING KONG
2 ENTENG KABISOTE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 KUTOB	3 MULAWIN
4 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL	4 MULAWIN
5 EXODUS	

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1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	1 TERRORIST HUNTER
2 ENTENG KABISOTE	2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 MULAWIN	3 KUTOB
4 TERRORIST HUNTER	4 EXODUS
5 KUTOB	5 ENTENG KABISOTE
6 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL	6 MULAWIN

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1 KING KONG	1 KUTOB
2 EXODUS	2 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
3 MULAWIN	3 EXODUS
4 ENTENG KABISOTE	4 AKO LEGAL WIFE
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE	5 ENTENG KABISOTE
6 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL	6 MULAWIN

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Most fascinating . . .

From page A3-1

perate Housewives." But Felicity did admit that, on the red carpet, her husband, the fine actor **William H. Macy**, is relieved that the media glare is no longer just on him. Off the red carpet, she said, her name might as well be Jane Doe.

"I'm never recognized. Even when I want to be. Once I went to the airport and did the whole star thing, baseball hat and sunglasses and thinking that people are still going to recognize me. I walked through the airport thinking, it's going to come any second. Nothing. I got to the counter after standing in a long line and there was something wrong with my reservations. I kept going, yeah, I was at work yesterday—we work really long hours. I said, ask me what I do and the clerk wouldn't even ask me (laughter)."

Ang Lee

On how he directed the love scenes of **Heath Ledger** and **Jake Gyllenhaal** in the acclaimed "Brokeback Mountain":

"I am a shy person. I figured the best way to go about it is not to talk about or rehearse the love-making scenes. We rehearsed everything except actually having them touch each other. A good device was to set the technical standards very high so it's very complicated—if they screw up, they would feel sorry for the crew and everybody (laughter) so that distracts them from 'un-comfortableness.' On the shooting days, they were professional. They jumped in, did it and blocked out their

ANG Lee is a "mystery."

JOAQUIN Phoenix: Awkward boy, intense man

shyness."

Heath Ledger

And Heath on working in the wilds with Ang Lee: "I remember waking up at four o'clock in the morning. We had to get up early. Michelle (Williams, whom he met on the set) and I were eating cornflakes. I looked out the window and there was Ang sucking the eyeball out of a rainbow trout (laughter). Michelle and I were like, ugh! (Laughter) The minute we walked out there with our coffee and cornflakes, Ang sliced the tail off this thing and offered it to us (laughter). He is a mystery. He doesn't pat you on the back and say, well done. He just goes, OK, good, let's move on and just walks off. This filming experience became lonely for me. It was such a struggle. I realized what he was doing and I wasn't going to back down. So each day you come back wanting to do better."

Quincy Jones

I wore my **Ray Charles** T-shirt when I met this legend. Quincy was only 14 when he met Ray. When he talked about folks by their first names, like Ella and Sarah, you knew he was referring to the other legends he worked with when he was a mere teenager. He is The Man but playfully, he pointed at me as the one when we posed for pictures.

"I started with **Billie Holiday** when I was 14. I also started working with Ella (Fitzgerald) and Sarah (Vaughan). I worked with **(Count) Basie** since I was 13. Ray Charles and I met when I was 14. I was fortunate to have worked with so many different kinds of people—**Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra, Michael (Jackson)**."

Joaquin Phoenix

It is always almost a shock to see Joaquin in person because he looks like this awkward boy but onscreen, he can be this intense man, on current display in his impressive performance as the singing, guitar-strumming Johnny Cash in "Walk the Line." There is fire in those eyes though, even in person.

On whether he tapped the "personal tragedy" (he was around when his brother River died) in his life to enact a similar plot point in "Walk the Line": "I see why people would assume that I use or project my personal experiences. But that has never been of help to me in any of the work I've done from the very beginning."

Robert Downey Jr.

Our interview with this underrated actor (he can be the best if he gets really serious with his career—and he seems to be doing that now) was one of the most fun sessions. He had just gotten married to producer Susan Levin, whom he proudly introduced to us.

"Come on, Mrs. Downey, get up! She won't do it. She's beautiful. We had a hell of a session last night (laughter). (Pretending to be Susan) It's disgust-

MOST/ A3-4

ROBERT Downey Jr: Fun!

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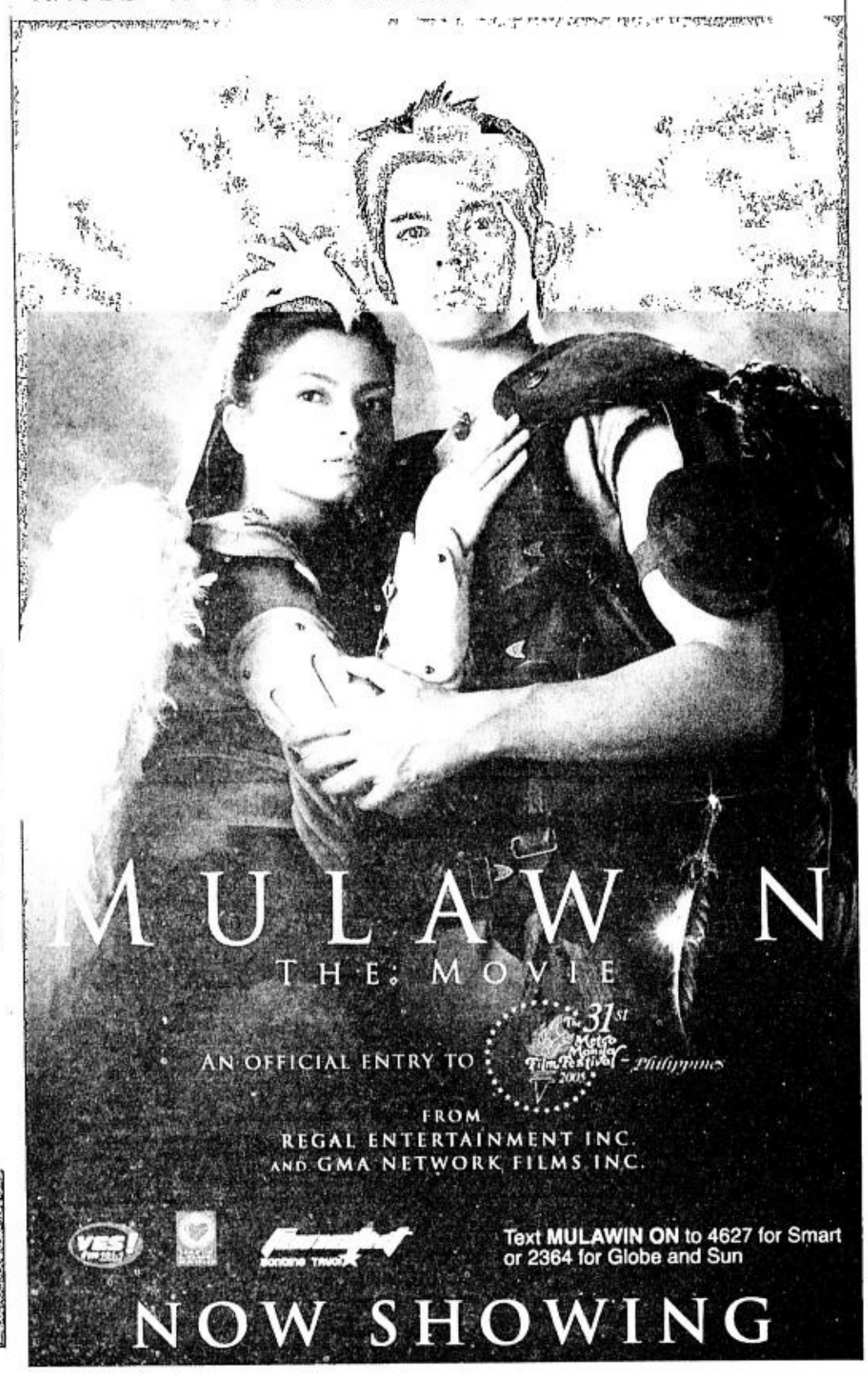

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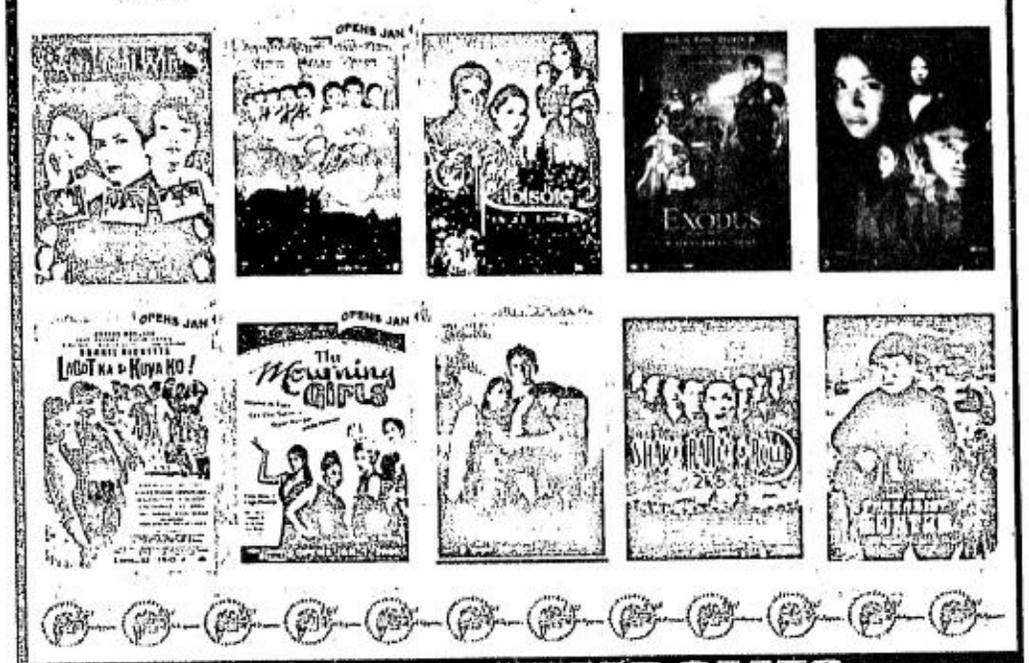

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1 EXODUS	

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1 KING KONG	
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SM MEGAMALL
1 EXODUS
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 EXODUS
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5 KUTOB
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 TERRORIST HUNTER
8 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
9 EXODUS
10 EXODUS
11 AKO LEGAL WIFE
12 MULAWIN THE MOVIE

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 EXODUS
3 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
8 KUTOB
9 TERRORIST HUNTER
10 EXODUS

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 KUTOB
4 EXODUS

SM VALENZUELA NOW OPEN
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 KUTOB
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
4 EXODUS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
2 TERRORIST HUNTER
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 EXODUS
5 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
6 EXODUS
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
8 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
9 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
10 EXODUS
11 KUTOB
12 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 EXODUS
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE
5 EXODUS
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
8 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
9 KUTOB
10 TERRORIST HUNTER

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 EXODUS
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 EXODUS
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 KUTOB
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE
6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
7 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
8 EXODUS

SM CITY MANILA
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 AKO LEGAL WIFE
4 EXODUS
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 EXODUS
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
8 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
9 TERRORIST HUNTER
10 KUTOB
11 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
12 EXODUS

SM SAN LAZARO
1 EXODUS
2 KUTOB
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

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Mulawin The Movie

TONIGHT!

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LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 EXODUS
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 KUTOB
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 EXODUS
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM MOLINO NOW OPEN
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 EXODUS
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY BACOOR
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 KUTOB
5 EXODUS
6 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY MARILAO
1 EXODUS
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 EXODUS
2 KING KONG
3 AKO LEGAL WIFE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY LUCENA
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 KUTOB
3 KING KONG
4 EXODUS

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 KING KONG
2 EXODUS
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 KING KONG
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 TERRORIST HUNTER
6 KUTOB
7 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
8 EXODUS

SM CITY ILOILO
1 EXODUS
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
3 KUTOB
4 TERRORIST HUNTER
5 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
6 KING KONG
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 EXODUS
2 KING KONG
3 KUTOB
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 KING KONG
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
4 EXODUS

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

Most fascinating . . .

From page A3-3

MICHELLE Yeoh is totally Asian.

ing that he would even say that (laughter). I'd like to say at least that our session last night was predicated by her saying, you look like the devil (laughter). She is blushing? Honey, that was really sick and I'm sorry I had to say that (laughter). I can't do that anymore."

John Malkovich

With a scarf gaily wrapped around his neck, John talked in his legendary slow monotone. Later in the afternoon, **Johnny Depp** did a funny, perfect imitation of his friend John's drawling speech.

Here's John on whether he is eccentric: "I go to the bathroom and everything (laughter). I can't really imagine what people would see in me as the slightest eccentricity. I am easily one of the most normal people I know. And that's not because I only have a small circle of lunatic acquaintances (laughter)."

Q'ORIANKA Kilcher: Colin who?

Michelle Yeoh

It's always a source of pride when we interview a fellow Asian. And folks like Michelle and Ang never disappoint.

"Malaysia will always be home. I hold a Malaysian passport. When I have a hard day or a few consecutive hard days, the only food I'll eat is Malaysian. I will find it whether I'm in LA, San Francisco, New York, London or Paris."

Nora Ephron

Okay, Nora's direction and screenplay of the "Bewitched" movie were not bewitching but her real life is. How many women can boast that **Meryl Streep** portrayed them onscreen? In "Heartburn," Meryl was Nora.

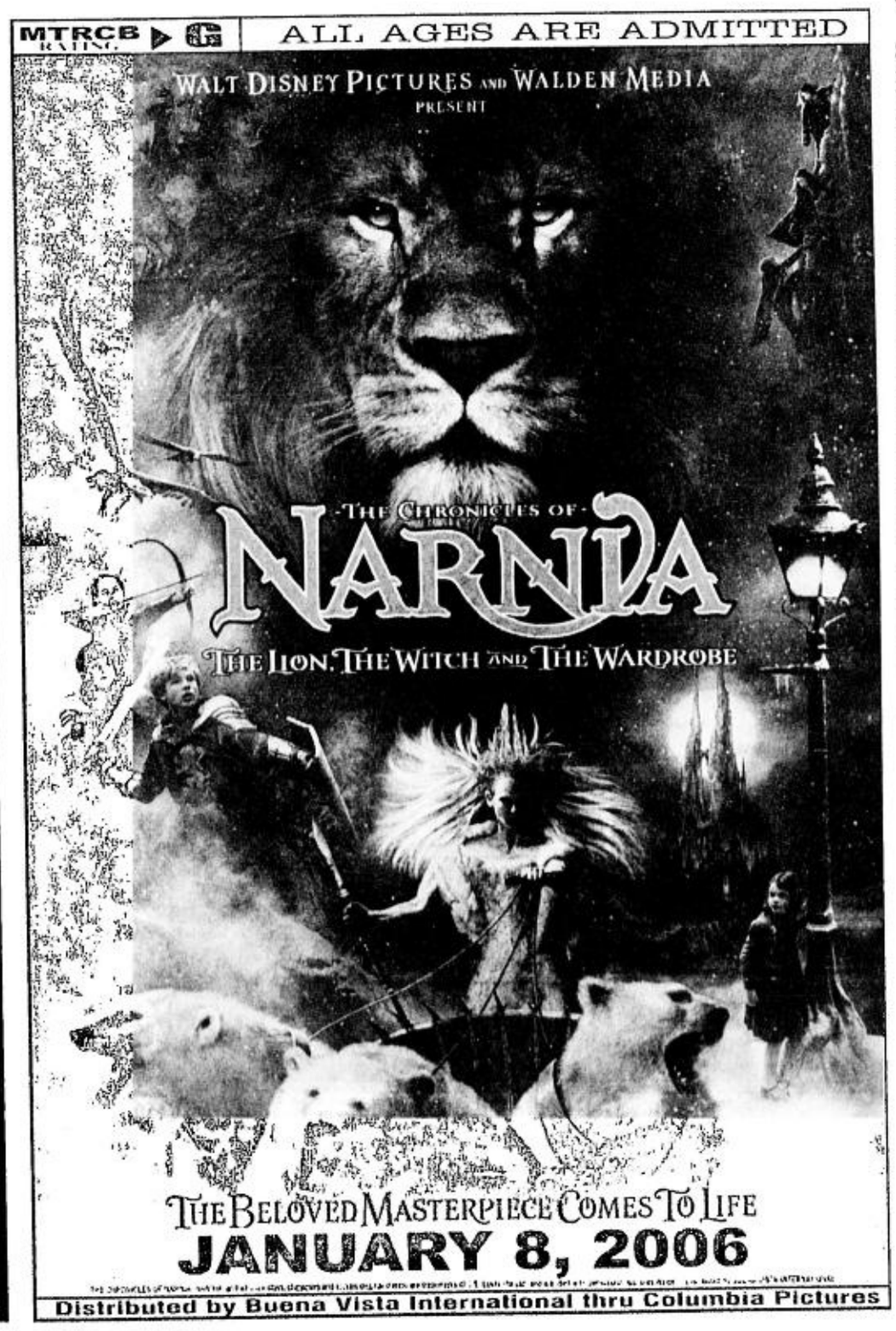
"I'm now at the age when you look at every single minute you're here as a present because you have so many friends who are getting sick. I wish that I, too, could rewind the clock like Isabel in 'Bewitched.' I would like to rewind it to about 20 years and be nearly in my 40s again. Why? Because I don't want to die."

Q'orianka Kilcher

Q'orianka who? She plays Pocahontas in **Terrence Malick's** beautiful, exquisite "The New World." Q'orianka was only 14 and had very limited acting experience when she shot this finely photographed and acted film but watch her tackle the Pocahontas role with impressive maturity. At our interview, Q'orianka, now 15, revealed that she designs and sews some of her clothes, is forming a human rights/environmental activism organization and loves to sing. She stood up and belted a bluesy number that left us jaw-slacked and clapping. She is the young talent to watch in 2006.

Would you believe this girl had no clue as to who **Colin Farrell**, her Capt. John Smith in "The New World," was? "I was just like oh, great, Colin Farrell. Ah ha, cool. When I met him and as the relationship between John Smith and Pocahontas was growing in the filming, I kind of had to let myself fall in love with him in a way and have a crush on him. Colin is a really wonderful person."

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)



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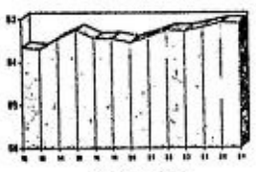


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱53.09 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 29, 2005

¥117.83 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 29, 2005

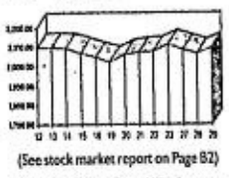
GOLD: $517.50-518.00
per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 29, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Stocks advance 1.4%

STOCKS YESTERDAY ended the year on an upbeat note, as investors took advantage of the market's recent losses to hunt for bargains, traders said.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 28.72 points, or 1.4 percent, to 2,096.04.



(See stock market report on Page B2)

The index shed 2.1 percent over the past two trading days, including Wednesday's one percent loss.

STOCKS/ B3

Sino firm funds CNG venture

Synergy sets aside $200M for alternative fuel facilities

By Abigail L. Ho

CHINA'S SYNERGY INTERNATIONAL Resources Group Co. Ltd. has committed to invest some $200 million in the country's compressed natural gas (CNG) industry.

The government is promoting the use of compressed natural gas as an alternative to gasoline and diesel fuels to ease the country's dependence on imported oil.

According to Mario Marasigan of the Department of Energy, the transport sector alone consumes around 53 percent of the oil the country imports each year.

The government hopes to save on fuel use by converting conventional gasoline or diesel land and marine transportation into CNG, Marasigan said.

Under a memorandum of understanding with the DOE, Synergy will set aside $200 million for the establishment of a CNG refueling system in Metro Manila.

The CNG refueling system will include mother-daughter refilling stations, mobile refueling and other facilities, according to demand.

The DOE said that Synergy would start a feasibility study on the establishment of a CNG refueling system on or before March 1, 2006.

Apart from its monetary investment, Synergy has also committed to impart its technical and operational expertise to personnel of the DOE and other concerned agencies, to aid the transport sector's transition to the use of CNG.

Also, the DOE will aid Synergy in preparing a study on the viability of the company's participation in the country's Natural Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport.

Marasigan said Synergy's entry into the country's CNG industry could boost the government program by offering the public transport sector better access to CNG.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Thunder out of Poro Point /B3

Gov't to raise P75B in Q1 /B2

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CORPORATION

Gov't to raise ₱75B in Q1

Lower borrowing requirement due to healthy revenue collection

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IS SET TO borrow P75 billion from the domestic market in the first quarter of 2006.

The amount, to be raised through the issuance of Treasury bills and bonds, is 47 percent lower than the P142 billion in domestic borrowings in the same quarter this year.

"It (reduction in domestic borrowings) reflects government's confidence in terms of having a healthy cash flow. We don't need to borrow as much as last year because of improving revenue collections," National Treasurer Omar Cruz told reporters.

The government borrows funds to pay maturing obligations and fill in the budget deficit.

The expected reduction of the deficit to P125 billion next year, from the estimated P160 billion to P165 billion this year, partly accounts for the lower borrowing requirement for 2006.

Of the P75 billion to be borrowed in the first quarter, P37 billion will be raised through the issuance of T-bills or short-term government securities, while P38 billion will be raised through the offering of T-bonds, or medium- to long-term government securities.

According to the Bureau of Treasury's borrowing schedule, the government will issue P3.5 billion worth of T-bills weekly in January and February, and another P3 billion weekly in March.

The government will issue P1 billion worth of 91-day bills, P1 billion worth of 182-day, and 1.5 billion worth of 364-day T-bills weekly in the first two months. For March, the government will float P1 billion worth of each T-bill tenor.

Also, the government will issue P4 billion worth of T-bonds weekly in January and February, and P2 billion weekly in March.

The Department of Finance, head agency of the Bureau of Treasury, earlier said the government's improving revenue collection was a result of the increase in the dividends collected by the Treasury from state-owned companies rather than a healthy tax collection.

PETPlans trust fund hits ₱2.7B

PETPLANS SAID ITS TRUST fund had grown to P2.7 billion, which was more than enough to meet its obligations to plan holders.

The fund, said the company in a statement, was invested largely in fixed-income government securities.

Computations as of December showed that PETPlans was expecting to pay plan holders P400 million in benefits between 2006 and 2011.

To date, PETPlans said it had a liquidity reserve of P1.185 billion consisting of cash and cash equivalents, which is 275 percent of expected payments over the next five years. Its 44-percent liquidity reserve is more than the 10-percent liquidity requirement of the SEC, the company said.

All pre-need companies are undergoing review for the renewal of their licenses.

In the same statement, the company said SEC officials had denied issuing a report that PETPlans had insufficient education trust funds, as reported yesterday.

An official of the SEC who refused to be quoted said that "it is premature to issue reports since the processing and review of license applications is extended up to the second week of January 2006."

The statement quoted SEC Commissioner Jesus Martinez, who is tasked with overseeing the pre-need industry, as saying that, "There is still no correct determination on whether or not a deficit exists because of the use of different formulas and percentages. It would be unfair for anyone to make conclusions at this time especially if company viability could be affected by loose talks that may prejudice the plan holders."

PETPlans president and CEO Lorenzo T. Ocampo said, "We do not recognize any of the reported education trust fund deficiency earlier cited in a news report."

Ocampo emphasized, "We have consistently complied with all SEC rules and regulations, thus, we are expecting the renewal of our license at the appropriate time."

San Miguel acquires full ownership of Berri

SAN MIGUEL CORP. SAID IT HAD ACQUIRED, through wholly owned subsidiary National Foods Holdings Ltd., the remaining 49 percent stake in Berri Limited for about A$169 million.

Berri is Australia's leading juice manufacturer. Its brands include Berri, Daily Juice, Australian Fresh, Just Juice, and Juice It Up. Berri also produces bottled water.

San Miguel initially bought half of Berri in August 2004, giving it 50-percent ownership of the company. It later acquired another 1 percent of the company for a controlling stake that enabled the integration of Berri's operations with National Foods earlier this year.

SMC president Ramon S. Ang said, "Combining National Foods and Berri provides San Miguel strong leadership positions in the dairy and juice business with brands that are popular with our consumers."

"Now that we own 100 percent of Berri and as we continue the integration process, we are focused on continuously improving execution and sustaining brand growth by creating quality products that strengthen the consumers' bond with our company."

2006: Winning the WTO fight

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

AT PAST 9 P.M. LAST DEC. 18, THE 149 MEMber nations of the World Trade Organization agreed on a ministerial declaration that aims to support the successful conclusion of the WTO Doha Development round by the end of 2006.

The next morning, a report in the South China Morning Post stated : "At least three countries—Venezuela, Cuba and the Philippines—had concerns over a draft text on services. If these three countries do not agree, the whole agreement could yet unravel."

Strong positions

The report was derived from the closing statement of Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila.: "Let me also be clear about one thing, Mr. Chairman. With regard to Annex C on services, the membership is not agreeing to any new commitments or obligations aside from those clearly provided for in the GATS and the negotiating guidelines. It was my country's firm stand that Annex C expressly commit itself to the due respect for national policy objectives and the level of development of individual members ... The full flexibility currently enjoyed by members under the GATS is therefore in no way impaired by Annex C."

Sec. Favila, with the able assistance of Trade Undersecretary Tomas Aquino, also took a determined stand in the Non-Agricultural Market Access Agreement (Nama) which covers industry and fisheries. He argued that necessary flexibility be provided for developing countries, so that solutions can be "achieved in a balanced and proportionate manner consistent with S&D (special and differential treatment)."

Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban and Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano were likewise forceful in advocating the two new categories of special products and special safeguard mechanisms for the Agreements on Agriculture (AoA).

They were instrumental in including the following text in the Ministerial Declaration: "Developing country members will have the flexibility to self-designate an appropriate number of tariff lines as special products, guided by indicators based on the criteria of food security, livelihood security, and rural development. Developing country members will also have the right to have recourse to a special safeguard mechanism based on import quantity and price triggers, with precise arrangements to be further defined."

Developing nations' statement

Previously, developed countries were able to secure tariff reductions from developing countries which harmed the latter because they were not strong enough to withstand these reductions. This time, principles were adopted that would result in fair rather than free trade.

I was privileged to be part of the five-person drafting committee that put forward a communiqué of the developing nations bloc constituting more than 80 countries. In the draft, I submitted the statements previously given by Sec. Favila. The following constitute only two of several parts of our submission that were adopted almost word for word by the developing nations in their joint communiqué:

- "The focus of those who massively distort world agriculture trade through subsidies and protect their markets with high walls of tariffs is getting even more access to the developing world's markets. This, to say the least, is a grossly unbalanced approach.
- The primary intent of S & D is to establish equity and fair competition where structural conditions are different across countries. In this light, we cannot address market access without the corresponding attention given to providing flexibilities for developing countries in agriculture, fisheries and other areas."

Next steps

Secretaries Favila and Panganiban, together with WTO Philippine Ambassador Manuel Teehankee, have done us justice with the strong positions they have taken to ensure fair, rather than free, trade in the WTO. However, we must note that the recent WTO conference fell short in giving specifics to the adopted noble principles. The ministerial declaration states that modalities will be submitted "no later than 30 April 2006" and comprehensive draft schedules based on these modalities "no later than 31 July 2006".

At a Dec. 20 post-conference assessment meeting of Alyansa Agrikultura leaders, they issued the following statement: "We believe that protecting our products from unfair trade is only half of the solution. The other half, which the government has not yet provided, is to deliver the long-promised competitiveness enhancement measures that will enable us to compete globally.

We commend our government negotiators for their work during this conference that bought us some time to resolve important issues. But this WTO agreement can turn into disaster if our negotiators abandon their advocacy in the next six months, when the important decisions on the WTO formulas and details take place."

The battle is not over. The intense discussions on the formulas that will 'operationalize' the noble principles are about to begin. Those interested in participating in these discussions can contact Arsenio Tanchuling (0920-924 4302).

(The author is chair of Agriwatch. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil @ yahoo.com or telefax 8522112).

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Wishing you all the best of the New Year and thank you for your continuous patronage.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Dec. 29, 2005)

Stocks	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	34	34	33	34	403,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53.5	54.5	53	54.5	2,979,300
China Banking Corp.	610	620	610	620	570
Citystate Savings Bank	18.25	19	18.25	19	120,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.61	1,130,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	57.5	59	57.5	59	60,000
International Exch. Bank	20.25	21	20.25	21	10,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32.5	31.5	32	683,400
Philippine National Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	22,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	13.5	13.5	12,400
Security Bank Corp.	33.5	34.5	33	34.5	202,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	32	32	32	32	16,200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	25,000
First Abacus Financial	0.65	0.75	0.51	0.75	1,520,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	3100	3160	3100	3160	30
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.02	117,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	150	150	150	150	10
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2100	2130	2100	2130	1,800
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	3,400
Diversified Fin. Network	4	4	4	4	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.92	0.93	0.91	0.93	2,790,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	715	740	715	735	111,260
Ipeople Inc.	2.95	3	2.9	2.9	228,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	600,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.046	0.047	0.046	0.047	13,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.5	3.35	3.5	3,161,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1780	1835	1780	1835	64,610
Ivantage Corp.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.6	8,800,000
Philweb Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	24,400,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14	15	14	14.25	1,500
Manila Electric Co. B	21.75	21.75	21.75	21.75	80,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	3,575,000
Petron Corp.	4.45	4.5	4.45	4.5	2,102,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	10,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	380,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3	131,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.75	0.78	0.73	0.78	5,580,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	20,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.4	2,576,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	128,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.25	23.75	23.25	23.75	120,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41.5	41.5	40.5	40.5	461,300
Pancake House Inc.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	393,000
RFM Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.71	0.71	280,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	65	64.5	65	170,900
San Miguel Corp. B	87.5	89	87.5	88.5	75,200
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	19.75	18.75	19.5	141,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.29	0.26	0.29	450,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	312.5	315	310	315	93,110
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	300,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	447,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11	11	11	1,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.06	2.08	2.06	2.08	90,000
APC Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	300,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	640,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.44	1.1	1.44	55,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9	9	9	141,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	500,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	4,884,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	100,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	4,100,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.165	0.175	0.165	0.175	1,060,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	920,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3.15	2.95	3.15	2,363,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.025	3,500,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.8	0.89	0.8	0.89	90,000
F&J Prince Hldgs. B	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	49	48	49	994,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	10,000
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	202,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	6,700
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.45	3.25	3.45	2,724,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	5,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	2,000,000
Medco Holdings	0.3	0.42	0.3	0.42	60,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	17,908,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.34	6,820,000
Paxys Inc.	6	6.4	6	6.4	5,664,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.28	1.32	1.28	1.32	746,000
SM Investments Corp.	240	240	239	240	116,180
South China Resources Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
Unwide Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.3	70,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	150,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1	1.02	0.99	1.02	10,600,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	50,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.42	1.48	1.4	1.48	300,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	4,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	13	13	12.75	12.75	69,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	9.7	9.8	9.5	9.7	865,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.7	9.9	9.7	9.9	4,957,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.1	1,500,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.88	1.88	253,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.2	0.2	1,140,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.41	0.42	0.41	0.42	720,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	1,347,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.3	2.32	2.3	2.32	80,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	190,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	1,090,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	83,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	200,000
SM Development Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.38	1.42	150,000
San Miguel Prop. Inc.	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	300
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8	8	7.9	7.9	10,038,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	60,000
Apex Mining Co., Inc. B	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	180,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.5	5.8	5.5	5.8	203,000
Benguet Corp. A	6.9	7	6.9	7	30,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	66,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	750,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.245	0.26	0.245	0.25	5,610,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.028	30,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	61,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.36	1.36	1.3	1.3	3,921,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.74	1.76	1.72	1.76	7,889,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	29	28	29	1,488,200
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	34,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	25,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	1,060,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000

First Gen cuts par value

THE SECURITIES AND EXchange Commission approved the reduction of the par value of First Gen Corp.'s preferred shares.

First Gen's par value would be reduced to 50 centavos from P100 per preferred share in line with a restructuring plan for its scheduled initial public offering.

The following amendments to the company's articles of incorporation were proposed:

- A stock split on the company's preferred shares that will reduce its par value to 50 centavos per share and an increase in its authorized preferred shares to 1 billion from 5 million;
- A change in the features of its preferred shares and a provision denying stockholders preemptive rights to subscribe to additional shares.

First Gen said in a report that the amendments were approved by a majority of its board on Aug. 17. The SEC approved the amended articles on Dec. 23. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

CURRENCIES

December 29, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.844737	1.000000	53.0670
Japan	Yen	0.007168	0.008485	0.4503
United Kingdom	Pound	1.449907	1.716400	91.0842
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.108966	0.128994	6.8453
Switzerland	Franc	0.641508	0.759417	40.3000
Canada	Dollar	0.725034	0.858295	45.5471
Singapore	Dollar	0.507015	0.600204	31.8510
Australia	Dollar	0.617228	0.730674	38.7747
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.241277	2.653224	140.7986
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.225239	0.266638	14.1497
Brunei	Dollar	0.505498	0.598408	31.7557
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000102	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020628	0.024420	1.2959
UAE	Dirham	0.229998	0.272272	14.4487
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.183800	62.8207
Argentina	Peso	0.277646	0.328677	17.4419
Brazil	Real	0.359233	0.425260	22.5673
Denmark	Kroner	0.134049	0.158687	8.4210
India	Rupee	0.018743	0.022188	1.1775
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.223517	0.264599	14.0415
Mexico	New Peso	0.078391	0.092799	4.9246
New Zealand	Dollar	0.576102	0.681989	36.1911
South Africa	Rand	0.132879	0.157302	8.3475
Korea	Won	0.000834	0.000987	0.0524
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025552	0.030248	1.6052

Thunder out of Poro Point

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

NEXT MONTH'S OPENING OF the Thunderbird casino-resort in Poro Point, La Union has suffered a new hitch, this time coming from the newly installed Catholic bishop of the province.

According to the grapevine, Bishop Artemio Rillera, SVD, has protested straight to President Macapagal-Arroyo, and GMA reportedly ordered the indefinite deferment of the opening of the San Fernando casino in view of another crucial bishops' conference next month.

Thunderbird had originally scheduled a pre-Christmas opening of a 1,000-square-meter casino within a 4.8-hectare property that used to house the Voice of America relay tower, part of its vision to make the Philippines a "platform to the entire Asian market."

Thunderbird Philippine chair Roberto de Ocampo, the former Ramos finance secretary now president of the Asian Institute of Management, could not be reached for comment on the latest setback.

The Poro Point casino-hotel project is a joint venture with the New Victor Co., a Philippine company said to be controlled by local politicians.

The Toronto-and Frankfurt-listed Thunderbird Resorts Inc. opened its first casino-hotel in the country in Binangonan, Rizal within the military-owned Eastridge golf resort only in April.

Despite what the company said was a "dismal start" where first full-quarter revenue reached $1.7 million as against a full quarter loss of $1.4 million, the Binangonan venture continued to show consistent revenue increases in line with company expectations that it would take "a year or more of developing" the market.

Money-go-round

• TO THOSE who may be thinking of acquiring a weekend home in Tagaytay, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. is auctioning 42 pieces of property in Canyon Woods Resort on Jan. 12.

Lot sizes range from 247 to 1,000 square meters, with prices ranging from P8,100/sqm for a vacant lot to P15,752/sqm for a lot with a Swiss-style cottage.

• The planned Lexus dealership in The Fort will be wholly owned and operated by Toyota Motors Philippines, and dealer Arturo Macapagal, contrary to what was reported in this column Wednesday, will instead operate the Toyota dealership annexed to the Lexus showroom.

• The ideally situated Pancake House branch in the old Greenbelt will be relocated to the mall's Paseo de Roxas frontage with the construction of an elevated pedestrian walkway that will connect the new Greenbelt 5 with the Greenbelt 1 carpark.

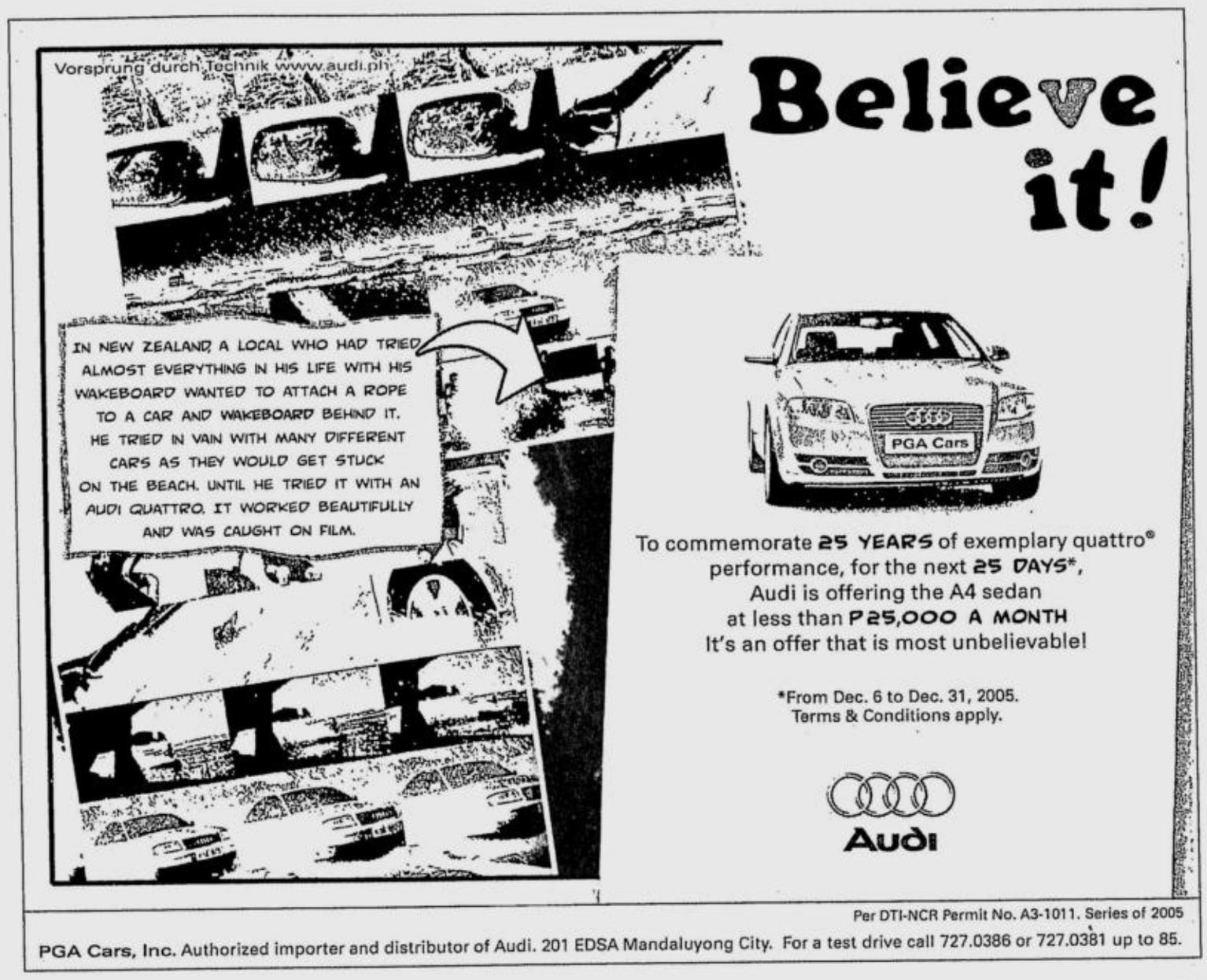
Heard through the grapevine

THE SPRAWLING South Forbes home of the late Producers Bank owner Henry Co is up for sale for P220 million. The 3,438-square-meter lot with a 1,043-sqm house at the corner of Banaba and Tamarind roads has been acquired by Banco de Oro, apparently when BDO bought the bank.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder and Wealth Secure	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
Wealth Builder / Wealth Secure	Dec. 26, 2005	Dec. 19, 2005
Fixed Income Fund	1.094341	1.092692
Balanced Fund	1.085571	1.073089
Equity Fund	1.066650	1.028851

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.
The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.



PSALM to take on Napocor's debts

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER SECURING THE CONsent of its three biggest lenders, the state-run National Power Corp. expects to transfer its debts to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), starting with the $500 million maturing in December 2006.

Napocor president Cyril Del Callar hopes to transfer the debts by the first quarter of 2006, even earlier if possible.

The $500 million maturing in end-2006 are five-year bonds that the state firm issued in 2001.

Del Callar said the transfer of Napocor's debts would help the state firm achieve its target of turning in a small profit after years of posting huge losses. At one time, the firm even became the biggest drain to government coffers.

Napocor was able to save around P18 billion worth of interest payments when the national government absorbed P200 billion of its debts.

Next year, interest payments will amount to between P18 billion and P20 billion, Del Callar said.

He expressed confidence that the debt transfer, combined with cost-reduction efforts, would help restore Napocor's financial health.

Lenders Asian Development Bank, World Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation had all given their consent for the transfer of Napocor's debts to PSALM.

The three lenders likewise approved the transfer of the six privatized Napocor assets, including the 600-megawatt (MW) Masinloc coal-fired power plant in Zambales sold to the YNN Pacific Consortium, to the winning bidders.

PSALM is now working on getting the ADB, World Bank and JBIC to issue "universal consents" for the transfer of Napocor assets to winning bidders in the future.

Jan-Oct coconut exports up 8.7%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE VOLUME OF COCONUT EXports went up 8.7 percent to about 1.62 million metric tons in the 10 months ending in October, according to an industry group.

The United Coconut Associations of the Philippines reported that preliminary figures showed that exports from January to October grew from about 1.49 million MT in copra terms posted in the same period of 2004.

Up to the end of October, exporters shipped out 859,593 MT of coconut oil, 328,900 MT of copra meal, 100,606 MT of desiccated coconut, and 103,954 MT copra equivalent of oleochemicals.

The numbers indicated that, in the period reported, shipments of coconut oil grew by 6.7 percent; copra meal by 9.3 percent; desiccated coconut by 19.8 percent; and oleochemicals by 21.6 percent.

Also, UCAP said that in October, overall coconut exports increased by 28.5 percent to 179,421 MT in copra terms from 139,602 MT in the same month last year.

"All major exports (except) desiccated coconut reflected massive growth from respective year-ago levels," the group reported. "Copra meal was the top performer, achieving an increase of 157.9 percent to 43,851 MT from 17,003 MT."

The trade of oleochemicals in copra terms shot up 118.1 percent to 11,552 MT from 5,297 MT.

Coconut oil shipments improved by 31.2 percent to 97,860 MT from 74,611 MT. But desiccated coconut went down 21 percent to 8,108 MT from 10,268 MT.

UCAP also reported that Europe was the top destination for coconut oil export in October, with the volume reaching 55,209 MT, representing 56.4 percent of total shipments for the month.

Stocks advance

. . . From page B1

The main index was up 15 percent from its 2004 closing level of 1,822.83. There will be no trading on Friday, a public holiday.

Blue chips dominated trading, led by Bank of the Philippine Islands, which rose 1.9 percent to P54.50, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., up 3.1 percent at P1,835, and Globe Telecom, up 2.1 percent to P735.

The peso stayed firm, boosted by remittances from overseas Filipino workers and market optimism on the government's improving finances, traders said. The dollar closed at P53.090 on the Philippine Dealing System, marginally higher than Wednesday's close of P53.080. *AP*

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

BUSINESS *Friday*

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Baguio drivers sell cocofuel to help clean air drive

BAGUIO CITY—THE BUZZ ON BAGUIO streets these days is that the shift to alternative fuel is a good move for jeepney drivers, who suffered too many blows from the 26 gasoline price increases 2005.

Jeepney drivers in Baguio, Benguet and La Union are being offered to invest in a cooperative that will retail coconut methyl ester (CME, more popularly known as cocofuel or coco biodiesel) to interested motorists by 2006.

Leo Rimpillo, local chapter chair of the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines (Fedjodap), says public utility vehicles suffered from unstable gasoline prices, but oil firms have been hostile to plans that would provide clear alternatives to mass transportation groups.

The major oil companies refused government proposals to carry CME products in their service stations, despite growing demand for this alternative fuel product at the height of the oil price fluctuations, Rimpillo says.

So Fedjodap, the city's barangay governments and alternative fuel advocates have agreed to set up 20 CME stations run by a cooperative of mass transport players, which offers continuous supply of the alternative fuel, says Rolando Reyes, chief of the pollution control division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Cordillera.

Both Rimpillo and Reyes are members of the Fuels for Life coalition, which promotes renewable energy products like CME.

Consumer alarm over the value added tax on fuel and the impact of the oil crisis tripled alternative fuel sales in the last quarter of 2005, says Divina Chingcuanco, country director of the United Nations' Sustainable Energy Development Program (SEDP).

In Baguio alone, the SEDP says consumption for biological diesel products like CME increased from 1,101 liters in 2004 to 9,586 liters of CME products this year, based on reports provided by 20 CME outlets.

By 2007, the drivers' cooperative should be able to sell to 80 percent of Baguio's motorists, Rimpillo says.

Over 200 of the city's 4,326 jeepney drivers actively used CME this year and they now see the value of owning their 20-liter tanks which would sell CME.

Reyes says the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory had announced in October that Filipino-produced CME is actually superior to biodiesel produced from soybeans. The NREL study also showed that CME has a shelf life of a year.

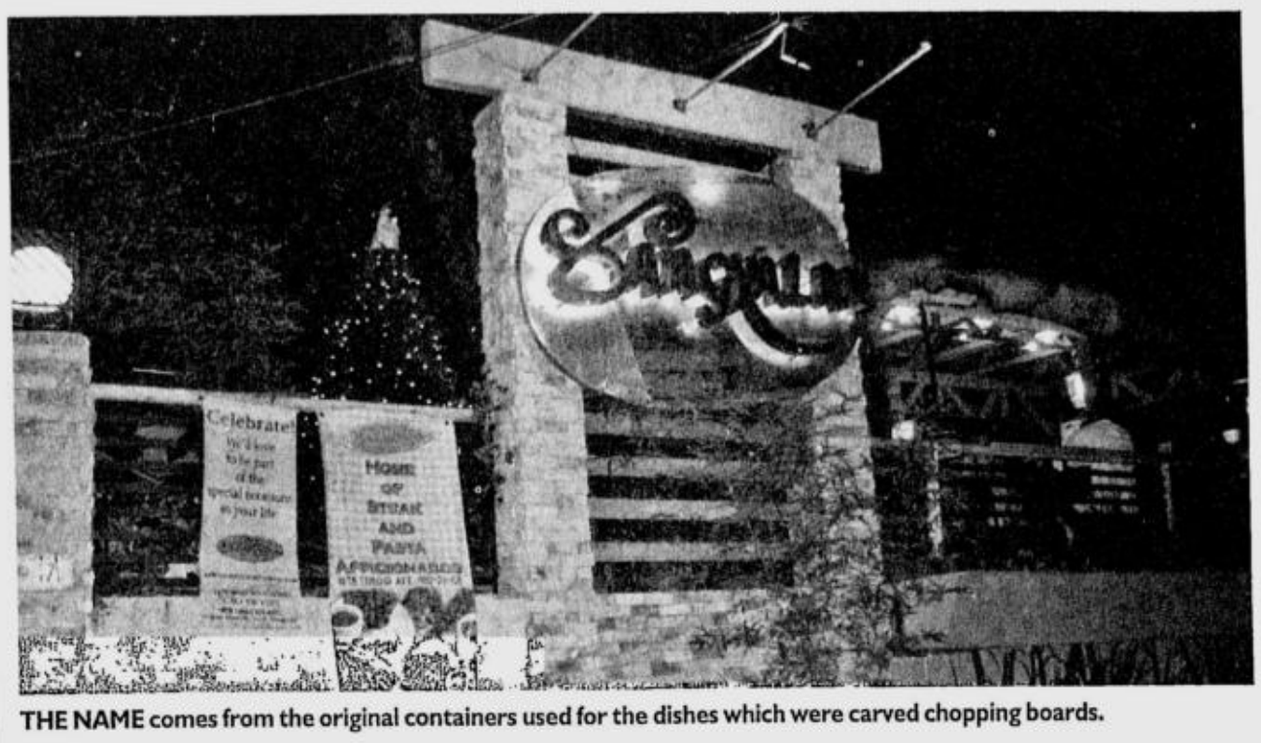
Rimpillo, a retired electrical engineer of Texas Instruments Philippines Inc., says the CME stations might end up competing with the regular gasoline service stations that would not carry CMEs.

But the long-term goal of CME stations run by jeepney drivers is "corrective economics," he tells the INQUIRER.

The successive oil price hikes cost the average jeepney driver half of his daily revenue, he says.

"Baguio taxi drivers, who rely on boundary revenues, went home with only P50 for a day's work. They were hit really bad [by the oil price hikes]," Rimpillo says. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

DRIVERS Richard Liquigan (atop the jeep hood) and Renato Flores, say they have been campaigning about the virtues of CME, claiming that tests made here this year prove it can help them a tank full of diesel, savings costs. VINCENT CABREZA



THE NAME comes from the original containers used for the dishes which were carved chopping boards.

Tapping the next generation

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HOW DO YOU REINVENT YOURself?

After 12 years in the restaurant business, "Sangkalan" (chopping board) owned by Carlos de Guzman has relaunched itself as a "dining experience" and has opened its doors to a more vibrant, finicky and young crowd.

Where before it titillated the palate with its special grilled meats, seafood dishes and other popular Filipino cuisine, Sangkalan will now tickle the other senses with its tie-ups with a wellness center, an Internet café and recreational facilities.

Sangkalan traces its roots to "Mommy's Best Country Basket," a sandwich line in the 1980s located in the food stalls of SM malls.

Mommy's Best served native rice cakes like "puto bumbong" and "bibingka" and its bestseller then—pork loin sandwiches.

"Mommy's Best" was born at a time of economic uncertainty after the death of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., which did not discomfit De Guzman from trying his hand at going into his own business.

"Before I used to work as a medical sales representative. It was during the death of Ninoy, when everything was a bit shaky, that I thought of venturing into my own business," De Guzman says.

Sometime in the late 1980s, De Guzman and his wife migrated to the US after he was petitioned by his parents.

For a time, he helped his brother run a restaurant in New Jersey called Manila Sunset which served Filipino dishes. Finding life in the US stressful, De Guzman and his family decided to go back home, unpacking a dream to put up their own sitdown

DE GUZMAN

restaurant somewhere in Quezon City.

"In the US you had to do everything, from being a cook and a janitor. Labor is so expensive," he says.

"I always tell people to make a living in America and make life here," De Guzman said.

In 1987, before the De Guzmans left for the US, "Sangkalan" had a dry run at the Hi-Top Grocery in Quezon City, as a food stall where dishes were served on carved chopping boards.

"Sangkalan" no loger serves dishes on chopping boards but the name stuck. There are now three restaurants in Quezon City. Sangkalan's first branch opened in 1991 along Visayas Avenue. The second is the one on Scout Albano, its biggest restaurant with a capacity to accommodate up to 200 persons. The third is along Commonwealth Avenue at the corner of Pearl Street, Fairview.

Scout Albano also has a music room with videoke equipment and a stage which any customer can use.

De Guzman says the music room draws friends and family and fosters new friendships since the stage is open to anyone who wants to belt out a song.

"Our target market is mostly the family. Now, our target is the younger crowd . *Dati suki ko mga parents, ngayon mga anak na*, the second generation," De Guzman says.

With its proposed rebirth, Sangkalan has tied up with spa and wellness group Bodyworks who set up chair massagers at Sangkalan restaurants for demonstrations.

Sangkalan is also teaming up with Internet chain Station 186 to provide its loyal customers with privileges such as discounts to these Internet stations courtesy of their loyalty cards or "indulgence passes."

Aside from this, it also plans a partnership with wall climbing resorts to provide privileges to customers.

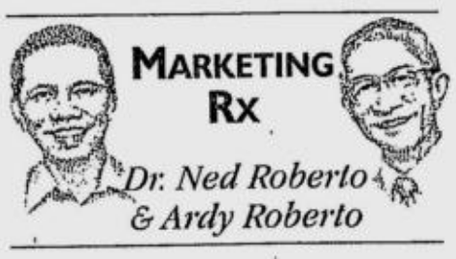
And speaking of loyal customers, De Guzman fondly recalls one customer who celebrated all the important occasion in his life at Sangkalan—his first date at Sangkalan, his engagement, wedding reception, baptism and his children's first birthdays.

"That customer of mine, I don't charge him anymore," De Guzman says.

While he hopes to recreate this same experience with all his customers, for now, De Guzman is glad Sangkalan has weathered the hard times.

"Customer service, that is our priority. My customers from way back are still my customers. Now it is the second generation, the children of my customers. I want it to be a dining experience for everyone," De Guzman says.

Brand equity questions for a brand new year



Q: OUR BRAND BRAND NAME products are manufactured by different suppliers, how should we communicate and maintain our brand equity if the products that our brand carries are manufactured by different suppliers?

A: This seems to be a similarly situated case as our last question on the "brand extension temptation"—one brand name is used for several products "manufactured by different suppliers."

Keep this in mind. The fact that different suppliers manufacture the different products under your one core brand name has actually nothing to do with your brand equity.

An example that comes to mind is the omnipresent iPod. The core brand is iPod. Then you have iPod mini, iPod nano, iPod shuffle, iPod video, and then there are different variants depending on the size of the gigabites—4gb, 8gb, 20gb, 40gb, etc.—that determine how many songs can fit into your iPod.

Again, the core brand is iPod. The mark brand is Apple. But it's not manufactured by Apple but by some suppliers somewhere in China. But notice how Apple communicates this:

iPod Nano

Designed by Apple in California

Assembled/Manufactured in China

Consumers don't seem to care if the iPods that they buy are manufactured or assembled by Apple. In fact, according to the manager at Electroworld and Avant in Greenbelt, there is a worldwide shortage of iPod nanos (the 4gb variant specifically) thus giving the junior MRx-er an excuse not to buy an iPod nano 4gb for his wife this Christmas. Anyway, the fact that iPods are manufactured by different suppliers in China do not matter. What seems to matter is that there is comfort in the mark branding that iPods are in fact designed by "Apple in California." Therefore, you don't even have to mention specifically who the manufacturer or supplier is.

Another example is the IBM Thinkpad. Thinkpad is the corebrand. The mark brand is IBM. But do you know that Thinkpads are now made by the indigenous Chinese brand, Legend? IBM does not trumpet this fact.

Nor do you have to trumpet the fact that your brands are made by different suppliers.

Exception

Retail is an exception. Abenson, Electroworld and Avant are the brand names of a chain of appliance and high-tech gadget stores belonging to one company or family. They don't carry their own brand names (unlike the electronics shop, RadioShack, or even the Sony shop which of course only carries Sony brand products) but they do communicate that they carry the hottest, latest brand name appliances and gadgets-from Sony PS2s and iPods to the latest Nokia cell phones and Philips DVD players. In this case, the other name brands build or maintain the brand equity or positioning of Abenson, Electroworld and Avant. Abenson's sub-branding and positioning says "All About Appliances."

Your brand equity is in your positioning.

Your question seems to assume that brand name is the same as brand equity. That's not so. Your brand name is your "core brand." Your brand equity is your subbrand or brand positioning. Here are examples of sub-brands or brand positioning:

* The World's Local Bank. (HSBC.)

*Our name, Our promise.(Sharp)

*Delighting You Always (Canon)

*Simply Amazing! (Smart)

*Happiest Celebration on Earth (Disneyworld)

*Balanced News, Fearless Views (Philippine Daily Inquirer)

*Love Ko 'To (McDonald's)

*Hindi Ako Aalis (PGMA)—or that seems to be her positioning.

We're sure you've heard of the practice of "repositioning." So then your question about how to maintain your brand equity is concerned with a non-issue. You can maintain your brand name but you don't have to do the same with your brand equity.

Suppose your brand positioning (that is, your brand's consumer value or brand equity) no longer resonates with your consumers' new priority and motivating product value. This may happen when your consumers changed to a new product value and left a former value that your brand had successful captured. It's clear here that you should no longer maintain your brand equity even though you decide to stick with your brand name.

Repositioning brands

This is a brand equity issue that Kellogg School's Professor Greg Carpenter called "the brand evolution issue." To explain this issue, Professor Carpenter traced how Volvo successfully evolved its brand equity over the years through several consumer value propositions. It started with a successful initial functional brand positioning on "safety." Volvo's ad agency very persuasively communicated this positioning in Volvo's TV ads. Then when most competitors matched Volvo on safety and Volvo started experiencing reduced sales growth, it shifted by finding a new priority value among its target consumers. This time the consumer priority was for a consumer "image" value: the desire of this consumer niche to manifest its being a "responsible and caring parent." Again, Volvo's new creatives executed this new brand positioning with a convincing attention getting and attention holding TV commercials. This changed brand equity restored Volvo's sales growth. But when this brand positioning showed signs of wear-out similar to the previous "safety" positioning, the Volvo marketers then evolved the brand to a third value proposition that its research found with the target consumers. This time it was the inadequately satisfied need for "a unique driving experience" that called for an "experiential brand positioning." The ad ("Save Your Soul") campaign for this brand positioning successfully communicated the value proposition. Sales increase followed.

In the local scene you also see this brand equity evolution. Take a look at Close-Up toothpaste. It successfully started with the brand positioning of "Toothpaste and mouthwash in one." When its consumers started regarding that value as a minimum requirement, Close-up shifted to a new consumer priority value, namely, "fresh breath." It communicated this new brand equity in its "Close-Up Confidence" campaign. Then consumers eventually took for granted the fresh breath value. So Close-Up researched the consumers' new evolved toothpaste priorities. They found these to be: "stronger teeth and whiter teeth." So now, Close-Up runs on a new brand equity: "Stronger, Whiter Teeth and Fresher Breath."

So here are your Marketing Rx's. Maintain your brand name if you want to. As to your brand equity, maintain the consumer value for which your brand stands as long as this brand positioning resonates with your target consumers' unsatisfied or inadequately satisfied priority product value. The moment your consumers shift their priorities somewhere else, research on this shift and converge with that consumer shift. Reposition and shift your brand equity accordingly. For the persuasive communication of each of these shifts, get the help of your creative ad agency.

Send feedback to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412. God bless and Happy New Year!

People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Grand tours lined up for ATF delegates

AWESOME TOURS HAVE BEEN lined up for the participants of the Asean Tourism Forum (ATF) 2006 to promote the country's tourist destinations and boost foreign arrivals.

Seven tour packages involving choice destinations from north to south of the archipelago will be made available by the Philippine Travel Agencies Association to hosted foreign buyers and media right after the Jan. 13 to 21 ATF conferences, business meetings and travel exchange in Davao City.

This was revealed by the Philippine Host Council's land transportation committee co-chair Jojo Clemente and tours committee co-chair Chiqui Teotico, citing the ATF as the perfect opportunity to showcase Philippine tourism through exciting tours.

"We will ensure that all ATF hosted buyers and media will experience the best we can offer so they can bring home the good news and promote WOW Philippines worldwide," Teotico said.

They can choose any of the seven tours, each spanning three days and two nights. These are the Ifugao Rice Terraces/Sagada/Bontoc, Manila and its Environs, Sorsogon, Northern Palawan, Cebu/Bohol, Cagayan de Oro, and Camiguin Island.

The Ifugao tour offers a spectacular insight on Philippine culture as it features the scenic town of Sagada and its ancient burial caves and hanging coffins, and the amazing Banaue Rice Terraces, mankind's biggest sculpture and engineering wonder.

The tour of Manila and its environs covers historic Intramuros and Metro Manila's lifestyle centers and specialty hubs, and optional daytrips to Corregidor, Tagaytay, Subic, and Pagsanjan.

The Sorsogon tour involves close encounters with whale sharks, the world's largest fish, which grow up to 18 meters, weigh up to 40 tons, and live up to 100 years. The visitors can swim alongside the scores of harmless whale sharks off Donsol town.

The Northern Palawan tour is a choice among the town of Coron, the El Nido Resorts on Miniloc or Lagen islands, and Puerto Princesa City and its St. Paul underground river and Honda Bay, all involving exploration of deserted white sand beaches, kayaking along stunning limestone cliffs, and experiencing the beauty of unspoiled nature.

The Cebu/Bohol tour offers cosmopolitan entertainment in Cebu City and subsequent communion with nature in Bohol, home to the famed tarsiers and Chocolate Hills. For fantastic underwater scenery, both provinces have gorgeous diving spots - Malapascua Island in Cebu province, and the Panglao and Balicasag islands in Bohol.

The Cagayan de Oro Tour offers whitewater rafting among other exciting adventures. The participants will pass through 14 rapids of the Cagayan de Oro River in all of three hours of whitewater rafting.

Then comes the tour of the Camiguin Island, the country's natural spa with therapeutic hot and cold springs and various other spots for snorkeling and sightseeing.

But before the foreign buyers and media can pick from any of these tours at the end of the ATF, they may join the pre-event Beach Carnival on Jan. 17.

Designed to boost camaraderie among the delegates before the start of the ATF, the Beach Carnival is a fellowship day of fun and games at the Paradise Island Resort on the Island Garden City of Samal, which is just five minutes by boat from Davao City and has fine white sand beaches and diving spots, diverse natural attractions, and complete resort amenities, making it a great venue for relaxation, water sports, and other leisure activities.

Or, they may take part in the ATF 2006 Friendly Golf at Apo Golf & Country Club, one of the country's best. Organized by the TTG Asia Media, this sports event is open to all registered ATF 2006 delegates.

The ATF is supported by the Philippine Airlines as head of the organizing body's air transportation committee, TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd as travel exchange organizer, CNN as official international cable and satellite media partner, and Travel Weekly, TTR Weekly, and TTG Asia as official trade publications.

BEYOND MAKING CLEAN CARS

Honda has taken its social responsibility a step higher with its Adopt-a-Tree project in support of ABS-CBN's Bantay Kalikasan. Honda adopted a total of 7 hectares of land at the La Mesa Watershed, planting close to 600 seedlings of Philippine hard wood trees. Honda has been reforesting the watershed since 2002. A joint project of Honda Cars Philippines Inc (HCPI), Honda Philippines Inc (HPI) and Honda Parts Manufacturing Corp (HPMC), this is in line with Honda's global campaign for environmental protection and preservation. In line with its fuel conservation and environmental preservation campaign, Honda pledged to conduct tree-planting sessions annually to help complete the reforesting of the remaining 300 hectares of the La Mesa Watershed. Shown, from left, are Reynaldo Gener (HPI), Arnel Doria (HCPI), Yasushi Fukunga (HPI) and HCPI president and GM Takashi Sekiguchi.

HIMEX SIGNS CONTRACT WITH WVSUMC

Himex Corp, the leading provider of state-of-the-art medical diagnostic systems and the exclusive distributor of Hitachi equipments, recently inked a contract with West Visayas State University Medical Center (WVSUMC), a tertiary hospital in Jaro, Iloilo City. This big project is in line with the acquisition of various top-of-the-line and brand new Hitachi medical equipments such as a CT-Scan System model Presto-a 4-slices application; 1 ultrasound unit, model EUB 6500-4 probes with 3D; another unit of EUB 6500-5 probes with 4D; one X-ray machine, model DR-155HSII and a Radio/Fluoroscopy X-ray model TD-B8. Shown sealing the contract are (seated, from left) Rema Padilla-Ohno, vice president, Himex; and Dr. Ramon S. Guerra-chief of hospital, WVSUMC. Witnessing the signing are (standing, from left) Daisy Mangawang-senior sales manager, Himex; Sylvia Lunaspe-accountant; Dr Anna Victoria Sombong- bids and awards committee chair; Dr. Glenn Amouri Catedral-radiologist; and Mary Eugene Orillo, all from WVSUMC.

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For every P20-P29 load, they get 2 free texts; P30-P49 load gives them 4 free texts; P50-P74 load - 8 free texts; P75-P99 load -12 free texts; P100-124 load -16 free texts; P125-P149 load - 20 free texts; and, P150 load - 25 free texts! These free text credits are valid for 2, 3, 7, 10, 15, 20 and 30 days, respectively.

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ProductFILES

New year revelry made more fascinating

OVER THE YEARS, MANY magical nights have been spent by visitors looking up in awe of the display of colorful bursts of light from the fireworks shows of the Enchanted Kingdom theme park in Santa Rosa, Laguna. To usher in the new year, Enchanted Kingdom now shares the magic of its weekly night fireworks spectacular with the public through its new "Enchanted Kingdom fireworks." Now, Filipinos can usher in Christmas and new year with the same Enchanted Kingdom fireworks display, right in their own back yard.

These products are manufactured and distributed by Platinum Fireworks under license by Enchanted Kingdom. They are safe, user-friendly and manufactured to world-class standards. Coming in convenient packages, the pyrotechnic products carry the fireworks patterns that are presented weekly at the country's first and only world-class theme park.

At the apex of the theme park's achievements in fireworks presentation is Spettacolo Pirotecnico, its anniversary pyrotechnic display and production re-staged this Jan. 1.

The pyrotechnic products are available at Enchanted Kingdom's merchandise shops in Santa Rosa, Laguna, its Makati sales office, Shopwise Libis, Cubao and Alabang and at the Ever Gotesco Ortigas Complex and Ever Gotesco Commonwealth malls. For more information, call 812-7232, 867-1006 or 830-2111 to 16.

Pinoy 'tsokolate' from the best cacao beans

MISSING YOUR GRANDMOTHER's tsokolate from the best cacao beans done the old-fashioned batirol way?

Savor it once more as Tsoko.Nut Batirol at SM Makati, Walter Mart-Makati and at South Supertmart-Alabang gives you authentic Pilipino tsokolate made from the finest cacao supply coming from plantations in Samar and Leyte. Enjoy it plain, with peanuts and cashew nuts with or without sugar.

Also available are Pinoy meals, sugar-free cakes and coffee.

'Rad4AD' spices up Pinoy radio creativity

MYTH: RADIO ADVERTISING IS UNADVENturous and formulaic. Fact: There's more to radio advertising than the barker-voiced announcer and the giggling girl at the end of the spot. And it can be as brilliant as television and print advertising. Learn more about what you can do with your radio material from highly acclaimed lecturer on creative radio Tony Hertz as he conducts "Rad4AD Radio Workshop and Seminar Series" at the Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati from Jan. 4 to 6. Hertz is a 30-year veteran in the field of radio advertising, spanning four continents. The "Rad4AD" creative radio training program, which has also been successfully conducted in other countries such as Canada, United Kingdom, Singapore and Austria, promises to show participants how to create, sell and produce radio ads by being different and daring. The workshop is highly intensive training designed for agency and production creatives. It covers topics such as finding radio ideas, adapting TV, press and outdoor concepts, writing better dialogues and humor, presenting radio to clients, and more. This happens in two batches, on Jan. 4 or 5. Participants may opt to attend the one-day workshop on Jan. 4 or 5, or the seminar on Jan. 6, or both. Register now by calling Medy Torres at 884-7398, 884-7303 or 884-7366, or e-mail rad4admanila@yahoo.com.ph.

BDO CAPITAL, SB CAPITAL ARRANGE ATI NOTE FACILITY

BDO Capital & Investment Corp (BDO Capital) and SB Capital Corp (SB Capital) recently arranged and underwrote a P1-billion fixed rate corporate note facility for Asian Terminals Inc (ATI). ATI is one of the country's premier port operators and logistics providers. As the sole container terminal and multi-cargo operator at the Manila Port's South Harbor, ATI is engaged in delivering world-class services related to port operations and logistics for containers, general, and bulk cargoes. ATI will use the proceeds for its modernization and expansion program as well as to refinance existing debts. Shown at the signing ceremony Dec. 2 at the Manila Peninsula are (seated from left) Wilfredo Talastas (FVP/trust officer-Security Bank), Edmundo Soriano (SVP-Corbank-BDO), Reynold Gerongay (president-Robinsons Savings Bank), Albert Villarosa (president-Security Bank), Jeremy Rickcord (president-ATI), Ma. Luisa Nograles (VP-ATI), Jesus Jacinto (Vice Chairman-BDO). Standing (from left) are Gerald Abrogar (director-SB Capital), Conrado Gloria Jr (EVP-SB Capital), Patricia May Siy (SVP-Security Bank), Ma. Carmencita Lopez (AVP/trust division-Security Bank), Ed Francisco (EVP-BDO Capital) and Juanito Henson (VP-Robinsons Savings Bank).

LUCKY ENDORSES DESIGNER WHEY

Young celebrity Luis Manzano receives a tub of Designer Whey Protein and Detour Protein Energy Bars from the founding partners of Edgepro, the exclusive distributors of Designer Whey in the Philippines. Lucky has been a user of Designer Whey products to help him sculpt his physique for movie and television roles. Designer Whey products, which help build lean muscle mass and burn fat are available in over 200 outlets nationwide including Chris Sports Plaza, Toby's Sports, Olympic Village, Healthfood & Herb, Cutting Edge, Health & Beyond, Royal Sporting House, Fitness First, Gold's Gym, Clark Hatch and the Rockwell Club. It is also available per scoop at Fruit Magic and Big Chill stores. Shown are Edgepro founding partners Allan Tanchiong, Miguel Perlas, Dada Perlas, Greggy Romualdez and Charles Lim.

New year to remember at Linden Suites

EXPERIENCE A NEW YEAR TO REMEMBER AT The Linden Suites. From now until Jan. 8, The Linden Suites makes the season more memorable by offering promotional rates of P2,499 nett for an executive room, P2,999 nett for a studio suite, P3,499 nett for a one-bedroom suite, P4,499 nett for a two-bedroom premiere and P5,999 nett for a newly refurbished two-bedroom executive suite. Stay at Linden and enjoy discounts at the 2nd floor restaurant and bar and on massage and SPAromatherapy services at the Health Club. The Linden Suites makes every occasion special by prioritizing their guests' needs and preferences. They make it a point to always inject a personal touch in each event or activity, a vital ingredient that money can't buy. Feel the distinction of being a Linden Suites guest. Come and experience the difference at The Linden Suites. For inquiries and reservations, call The Linden Suites at 638-7878 or e-mail reservations@lindensuites.com.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2005

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS

The Widest Reaching Classifieds

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DIVISION

Main Office: PASONG TAMO, MAKATI CITY
☎ 897-8425 (Direct) ☎ 8978608 (Trunk) Fax 8978425
G/F ATRIUM BLDG., MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
☎ 5273342 ☎ 522-4406 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

ANNOUNCEMENT

INQUIRER SM Megamall Branch will be open today, December 30 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and on December 31 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. All branches will be closed on January 1, 2006.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

PERSONAL

COSMETOLOGY

WHITENING CAPS P1500
PINK Nips Lips Cheeks Cream
P800 • 4545667• 09189235216

MISCELLANEOUS

PENTAGON PSYCHIC
INT'L LOVE PROBLEM SOLVER
FENG SHUI ASTRAL SOUL READING
ALL KINDS OF PERSONAL
CONFIDENTIAL CASES, UFO
Contact 439-1326•0916-5217681

HOUSEHOLD

LIPAT BAHAY

•731-6833•LIPAT

L-BAHAY 9206784 4540520

OPEN&CLOSE VANS TEL#731-8549

OPEN&CLOSE VANS TEL#731-8549

•P1300/TRIP 742-14-57

PEST CONTROL

Property Pest 457-57-79

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

MANILA

61m² 3Stry P.Gil 5642622 RUSH

QUEZON CITY

★ KATIPUNAN EXT ★
LA315-1119m² Comml nr Ateneo
P9500-10T/m² 0918-9235216

HOUSE & LOT

MANILA

Don Pedro St. cor. Espiritu
nr. LA SALLE TAFT Bnew 4BR
5TB 2Carpt FA236 633-0092

MARIKINA

PROVIDENT VILL nr ATENEO
413m² w/ 3hses nr gate P4M
LOT ONLY 301m² gate Rush
2.2Mneg T6356003; 9338423

CAVITE

TAGAYTAY LOT 2,300SQM
P1200/m² TEL 7337767/69/73

TAGAYTAY NEW HOUSE P1.4M &
P3.5M TEL 7337767/69/73

LAGUNA

Laguna Bel-Air Sta Rosa
Low D/P Edna 0917-8312369
Mariel 0917-6215864

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

CONDO, HOUSE or LOT nr Mkt
1 3M-9M 2-4BR Resort-Type
Flexible Terms • 0917-5234223

RUSHI CONDO nr C5 D'Fort
Lakeview Manors 2BR w/Prkg 1.4M
0906-2621143 • 0917-8212400

MANDALUYONG

CONDO, BNEW, 09192189817

PASIG

VACATION HOUSE IN METRO
10% Down Move In NO Down
Nr Makati-Pasig P'que New
Resort Condo 0927-2401098

QUEZON CITY

QC Condo 580T 0916-5412000

VARIED AREAS

Gd Buys RFO 30T/M² up var size/
loc 5-20yr2p 09216908755

CONDO/TWNHSE

MANILA

BAYWATCH TOWER
M.H. Del Pilar St., Malate, Manila
(at the back of Chinese Embassy,
Roxas Boulevard, Manila)

ENJOY THE
MAGNIFICENT VIEW
OF MANILA BAY
UNITS FOR
SALE OR LEASE!
Furnished and Unfurnished
Pls. visit or call
5236640 / 5236630
AVAILABLE
Studio, 1, 2 and 3 BR
READY FOR OCCUPANCY

LOT

KALOOCAN

CAMARIN 400m² P2M with 1
bungalow & 2dr Apt Nr. EDSA
cor Jacinto & Biglangawa
570m² P10M 4214742

MAKATI

3.5M CARDONA ST 09208309744

QUEZON CITY

300SQM LOT P3.5M PARKWAY
VILL ROOSEVELT EDSA Q.C.
7337767/69/73

Banahaw Cubao 454m² P10M w
/6Dr Apt giveaway 4214742

GRAND VILLAS Top Row
w/view back ATENEO LOTS
hse & lots avble 426-5650
929-1832 • 0919-8212235

★KATIPUNAN Ext Resi lot
nr UP Ateneo 204 to 408m²
P8,500/m² 0918-9235216★

OTHER PROVINCIAL

Tgtay 320sqm 9175335698

BUSINESS SPACE

MEDLINK-CLINIC SHARING
TEL 09193512810/3391175

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1BR CTL 9 8019537/9175335898

MANILA

NR LASALLE 3BR 3TB 8992148

ROOM & BOARD

•FURNISH PASAY 8872865•

MANILA

1BR w/AC NR LaSalle 8992148

MAKATI

Mkti nr Ayala P1T Ldy 8974697

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HYUNDAI

00 Starex 9.5 A/T 1st own mint
545T T-8738913-14

ISUZU

'01 TROOPER 35Km 09178454534

02 Isuzu Trooper 1 own 30T Kms 1M
Neg. 523-1960 / 0928-3867789

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

MITSUBISHI

00 Advt 2.5D Sport 1st own mint
P365T Tel. - 8738913-14

PARTS & ACCESSORIES

QUICK SERVICE!8AM -7AM!
EFI;ENGINE TUNE-UP
WHEEL ALIGN;BALANCING
CREDIT CARDS HONORED
FREE AFTER SALES SERVICE
RUBBERVOLT 36 WEST AV
77VIS AV.115 MIND AV QC
371-5783 / 920-1794 / 455-6093 loc 20

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

Affordable Rent a Car Hiace, Vios,
Corolla Low Rates 0920-9518097

Carlines Rent a Car Vans
Coaster 4LOL Xpdtn U-Drive
Cars & Driver Services
813-1975 8131976 8103466

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

MARIAN CARS•VANS•BRDAL
8 9 6 9 9 5 6

Cheap Van 9330311;9348411

•FRANCIS CAR RENTAL•
ALL CARS U/DRIVE W/DRIVER
T-8334476,7291858 CEL 09198985176

CRV Innova Starex 9483535

• P800/L3 9136710 / 4333682

REVO w/driver 9272821

ABC OPEN 24 HRS.
HI-ACE*STAREX*CRV
L300*URVAN*REVO
NEW CARS/SUV/4X4/BUSES
MLA:536-8822*303-9789
Q.C.:426-2278*426-4084

CAR LOAN

1% Auto Easy 5344441

1% AUTOLOAN 788-0361

1% Car Lending 656-0140
United Tree Car Loan Corp.

1% CARLOAN 373-6519

1% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1% w/out taking car 5315577

1% w/out taking car 7262780

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/o taking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, the recognized leader in the newspaper industry with its **balanced news and fearless views** is committed to helping our trade partners achieve its business goals and serving the community via generation of employment.

We are in need of

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISORS

to work for our Distributor Partner in the areas of Pampanga, Bataan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Zambales.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

✔ **Will handle a sub-distributor partner to grow the business.**

QUALIFICATIONS:

- College graduates from the localities;
- Highly motivated; Aggressive; Hardworking;
- Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills both in English and Filipino;
- Preferably Male, willing to work on a graveyard shift, fast-paced, dynamic and flexible environment.

❒ Background in sales is not necessary, but a plus..

Send your ***Resume*** to **GQY Distribution Group Inc.** at **GQY Distributors Inc., Dolores Homesite Extension, Dolores, San Fernando Pampanga**

or call/fax 045-9614048 and look for **Mr. Mar Manabat or Mr. Jess Yap.** You can email it to jessy@mail.irnet.net.ph or qdydistribution.com.ph

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

Bids and Awards Committee
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	One (1) lot – Supply, delivery, installation and implementation of Email Enhancement: Virus and Spam Protection per BSP technical specifications and scope of work
Approved Budget for the Contract	P3,700,000 00
Completion Period	The delivery and implementation shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the approved Contract

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	21 December 2005 to 06 January 2006, up to 2PM only
2. Pre-Bid Conference	20 January 2006 , 3:00PM
3. Opening of Bids	07 February 2006, 2:00PM
4. Bid Evaluation	) These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods
5. Post-qualification	) allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations
6. Notice of Award	) (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,850.00 to the BSP Cashier

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI – Dec. 30, 2005)

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/o taking car 7723810/12

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BILLIARDS

15T UP NEW COMPL IMPTD 7767507

PETS

Doberman Pups Red
10weeks M-6T Grand Champ
Line PCCI Reg. with Vaccine Tel.
671-6014

WANTED TO BUY

WE BUY AT HIGH PRICE
ROLEX
5646593 5897041
5633742 0917-8473744

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

A NAME YOU CAN TRUST!
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
& OTHER SWISS WATCHES
DIAMONDS / JEWELRY
HI-APPRAISAL/FAST CASH
REPAIR/POLISH ANY WATCH
T#804-0484 • 834-2886

Buying Rolex
watch or any fine Swiss Watch
Fast Cash Call 09185113079

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8884040 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Libis Jap Rest Bar 4Rent
Complete Equipt Pay Dep 2D
Take Over Tom 0921-5586192

RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

NEED SIDELINE! Set your Hrs!
P/F up tp 20Kmo. 376-2642 & 44

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ANGEL A. ALCAYDE JR. was extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Doc. No. 238; Page No. 49; Book No. XXXIX; Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Conrado P. Sajor of Marilao Bulacan.
(PDI-Dec. 16, 23 & 30, 2005)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

ELECTRONICS ENGR 1YR EXPR.
MEYCAUAYAN T-7264046

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

In consonance with R.A. 8976 otherwise known as the Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000, the National Food Authority (NFA) as the implementing agency on iron fortified rice, wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on January 24, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City among all interested suppliers for the supply of THREE HUNDRED METRIC TONS (300 MT), MAXIMUM IRON COATED RICE PREMIX with an approved budget of Php 69.6 M, packed in twenty five (25) kg capacity multi-wall paper bag or its equivalent. Detailed product specifications and packaging shall be included in the Terms of Reference (TOR). Delivery period at designated NFA Manila warehouse/s shall be one hundred twenty days (120) upon the receipt of the Notice of Proceed.

All interested suppliers are required to submit price offers in Philippine Currency, (inclusive of all taxes) as specified in the NFA Bid Form.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the approved budget of Php 69.6 in the form of Cash, Cashier's and/or Manager's Check or an irrevocable L/C issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instruction to Bidders may be secured thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Manager, Department for Marketing Operations, 5th Flr., NFA Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City, Telephone Nos. 712-1564, 743-8696 or 712-3341 Loc. 8513 starting January 02, 2006.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) and Bid Documents will likewise be available starting January 02, 2006 up to January 10, 2006 (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a Php 15,000.00 non-refundable fee.

The **Pre-Bidding** conference will be held on **January 10, 2006**, at 10:00 a.m. at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.

Submission of eligibility requirements, technical proposal and price offers will be between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City on **January 24, 2006. Opening of bids** will start at exactly **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required or defect therein and accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Dec. 30, 2005 & Jan. 6, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
Bislig City

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Education, has received an Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of P1,749 Million under Loan Agreement # PH-P200, towards the financing of the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP) dated December 28, 1999. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments for the new construction of school buildings. In view hereof, the Government of the Philippines through the DepEd-SEDIP with the participation of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the City of Bislig as implementor, hereinafter called the Agency, wishes to receive bids for the new construction of an SBP Package at Tabon M. Estrella NHS located at Barangay Tabon, Bislig City.

1) Two Storey Four (4) Classroom Building with Guidance Room and Toilets
2) Two Storey Science Laboratory with Industrial Arts Building

Disbursement of the ODA loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans" No party other than the Department of Education shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claims to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only part of the project cost. As for the remaining portion, the Agency will take appropriate measures for finance. JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as DepEd-SEDIP under contract funded with JBIC ODA loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC

1) Will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in Corrupt or Fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
2) Will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a stated period of time, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA loans if it, at any time, determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract financed by JBIC ODA loans or other Japanese ODA.

Bidding is open to all Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) – registered contractor or joint venture contractors, with PCAB License at least Medium B Classification on Building. Prospective Bidders/Contractors shall meet the minimum qualifying criteria of three (3) years construction experience. The schedule of activities for the above listed projects is indicated below:

• Application and Issuance of Eligibility Forms (Upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P200.00)	January 2, 2006 up to 5:00 PM of January 16, 2006 at the BAC Secretariat Office, CPDO, City Hall Bislig City
• Submission of Letter of Intent and duly accomplished Application of Eligibility	Up to 5:00 PM of January 20, 2006 at the BAC Secretariat Office, CPDO, City Hall Bislig City
• Issuance of Bid Documents (Upon payment of non-refundable fee of P 6,000.00)	January 18-27, 2006 up to 5:00 PM at the BAC Secretariat Office, CPDO, City Hall Bislig City
• Pre-Bid Conference	January 30, 2006, at the Conference Room of the City Engineering Office, City Hall Bislig City
• Opening of Bids	February 10, 2006 at the Conference Room of the City Engineering Office, City Hall Bislig City

All particulars relative to eligibility, bidding, evaluation of Bids, Award of Contract and enforcement hereof shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR-A) of RA 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act "

The BAC reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility, or all bids, declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract if among, others, there is evidence of collusion, including any act which restricts, suppresses or defeats competition, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

The BAC also assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder(s) for any expenses or loss that they may incur in the preparation of its bids, or any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) on the ground(s) of BAC action, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made

All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) REYDANDE D. AZUCENA
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Bislig City, Surigao del Sur

(PDI – Dec. 30, 2005 & Jan. 6, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is given that at the meeting of the Board of Directors of **MZ LAUNDRY VENTURES, INC.** it was **RESOLVED** that the corporation be dissolved and its affairs wound up, and for that purpose a special meeting of the stockholders will be held on the 15th day of January 2006 at 1:00 p.m. at 41 Carreon Village, San Bartolome, Novaliches, Q.C., Philippines to take action on the resolution.

(PDI - Dec 30, 2005, Jan. 6 & 13, 2006)

NOTICE

This is to inform the public that **Esperanza S. Mariano,** Sales Operations Assistant, Laoag District Office, **Loyola Plans Consolidated, Inc.** has retired from her services since April 5, 2005. Two (2) official receipts of the company under her custody (Nos. C-001198927 and C-001198828) are unaccounted. All Claims arising out of this issue of said OR's are to be paid / settled by Esperanza S. Mariano in form of said documents.

(PDI-Dec 24, 30, 2005 & Jan 6, 2006)

visit us at: www.jobmarketonline.com

La Funeraria Paz - Sucat
Manila Memorial Park
NOW OFFERS
24 - HOUR
CREMATION SERVICES
820-1592 /825-9947

OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

Our Dearly Beloved

PEDRO "PERICO" P. CHUIDIAN

Peacefully joined our Lord on December 27, 2005 at the age of 75.

His children **GERRY, PEDRO & BINGLE** and **ROBERT**, together with his grandchildren, brothers **TONY** and **JUNIOR**, sisters **TITA** and **NICA** and his friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

There will be a 9:00 a.m. Mass at Arlington. Interment will be on December 31, 2005 at the South Cemetery, Makati City.

"And the time has come for my departure, I have finished the good fight. I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
–2 Timothy 4:6-7

The Officers, Board of Directors of **Mt. Matutum Medical Center, Incorporated**, employees and staff of **Socsargen County Hospital**, General Santos City condole with the bereaved Family of

CARLOS YUSEPENG

"Mang Caloy"

MMMCI Chairman of the Board
who
Peacefully rests in the loving arms of our Lord on the 27th of December 2005.

His loving wife, **Purificacion Yu** and children request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Anita V. Funeral Homes, Santiago Blvd., Gen. Santos City

Interment will follow after the morning Holy Mass on December 31, 2005 at Chinese Cemetery General Santos City.

Esperanza "Ching" Canivel Medina

Peacefully joined her Creator on December 28, 2005 at the age of 64.

Her loving son, **Troy**; brothers & sisters **Remedios & Peping, Amparo** (†) and **Carlos, Lita** (†), **Lydia** (†) and **Blas, Arnulfo** and **Delia, Au** and **Fe, Noel** and **Marie**, nephews & nieces, request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel C, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, 31st of December 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Chapels & Crematorium after the 7:30 a.m. Mass.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

PACIENCIA G. RIVERA

of Tigbauan, Iloilo and San Diego, California

Peacefully joined the Lord on December 19, 2005 in San Diego, California at the age of 80.

Her bereaved husband, **(Ret.) Col. Gregorio C. Rivera**, children **Chichi** and **Ernie Salas, Greg** and **Doris, Kit** and **Boyet Reyes, Rene** (+) and **Vicky, Bing, Butchoy** and **Lita, Babyboy** and **Trelly, Bebot** and **Grace, Monette** and **Alex Alvarez, Olive** and **Bien Capule, Paquito** and **Iquit, Vic, Caca** and **Malou**, grandchildren and great grandchildren respectfully request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Viewing Chapel, Marikina City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, January 3, 2006 after the 1:30 pm funeral mass at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

ERRATUM

In the obituary advertisement of **Jose Luis A. Ledesma** printed in this paper on December 29, 2005, the name of **Juan Bosco** was inadvertently printed as **Juan Basco.**

Our apologies.

Antonio Macapagal Gabat

Born: June 11, 1931

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 27, 2005.

His Kindness and good nature will never be forgotten.

His bereaved family, wife **Salud**; children **Ogie, Bubot, Mari, Cherry, Joey, Blanche, Michael** and their families request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Saturday, December 31 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat following the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Loyola Chapels, Sucat.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

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CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Concepcion, Marikina City

The public is hereby notified that **Mr. Erickson N. Reyes**, whose picture appears above, is no longer connected with Level Up! Incorporated effective 07 December 2005.

Please report to Level Up! Inc. any attempts by Mr. Reyes to transact business on the company's behalf.

levelupgames.ph
Level Up! Incorporated
11/F Pacific Star Building
Makati Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. Makati City
Tel No. (02) 7519600

(PDI–Dec 30, 2005)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PNOC
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282 / 5288

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

	Approved Budget
1 lot of Calcite Inhibition Chemicals under FGM 50320	*PHP 3,600,000.00*
Two Hundred Eighty (280) Cubic Meters Liquid Caustic Soda under GT 517414	*PHP 4,650,000.00*

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance upon payment of a non-refundable fee at the above address based on the following schedules:

PR No.	Date of Issue	Cost per Document	Contact Person
FGM 50320	December 23, 2005	PHP 400.00	Ms. Ma. Cristina Lynn M. Mercado loc. 5282
GT 517414	December 23, 2005	PHP 400.00	Mr. Anthony E. Cinaco loc. 5288

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall also be held on January 5, 2006 for FGM 50320 and GT 517414, 2:00 p.m. at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Procurement Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than 2:00 p.m. (Procurement Department Wall Clock Time) of January 26, 2006 for FGM 50320, and January 19, 2006 for GT 517414. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Dec. 23 & 30, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that, as of December 23, 2005, the name of the person which appears below is no longer registered as Lifestyles Independent Distributor. Lifestyles shall not honor any transactions, financial or otherwise, entered into by this person on the Company's behalf and, any representation they make pertaining to Lifestyles is without the Company's authority or consent.

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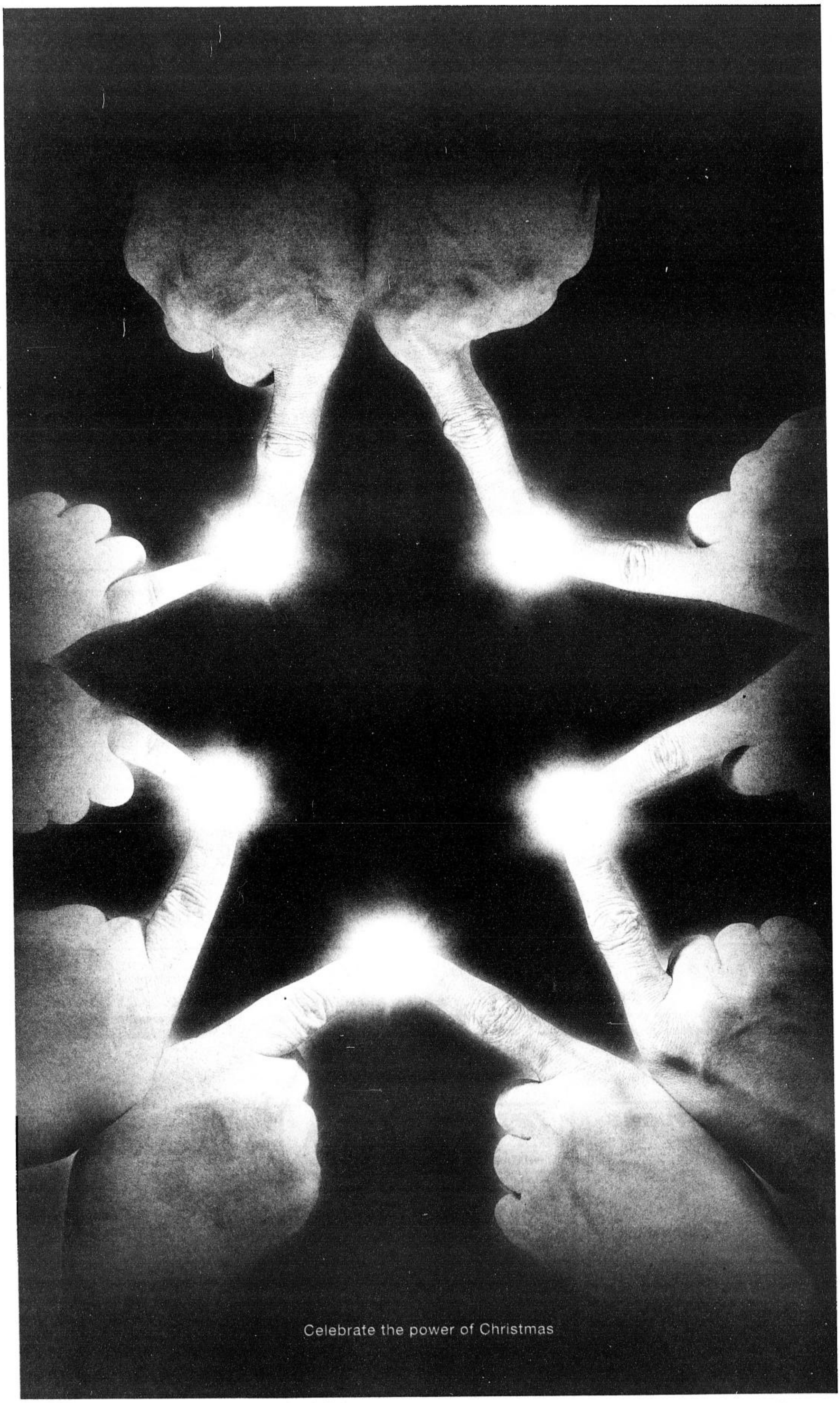
Lifestyles (Asia Pacific) Philippines, Inc.
Unit 104, G/F Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills 1500 San Juan, Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel.632 725 9098 • Fax 632 727 7089

NFA: Effectively ensuring food security despite low subsidy

FOR MORE THAN 33 YEARS NOW, THE National Food Authority has effectively been performing its mandates of ensuring national food security and stabilizing food supply and prices, despite the reduction of its annual subsidy allocation from P1.5 billion in 1997 to an average of P900 million since 2001. NFA director for public affairs Rex Estoperez said that in order for the food agency to continue financing its operations, it has to borrow from government financial institutions with interest as high as 8 percent per annum. With a measly government subsidy, the NFA has to find ways to fund its local procurement. This year alone, the food agency has to spend at least P1.65 billion to buy palay from local farmers. When there's a projected shortfall in local production, however, the NFA imports rice from foreign sources such as Vietnam, Thailand and China to assure the availability of the staple during the lean harvest months and for unexpected calamities or emergencies. Importation becomes more expensive when world market prices increase and the peso performs badly. In line with the government's social responsibility to ensure the availability, affordability and accessibility of food to the people, the NFA has maintained its selling price for rice pegged since 2001. This is despite the continued increase in other operational costs brought by inflation and other factors.

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES 722-1144 • 722-1155



Like a light breaking through the darkness, may the hope that fills your heart this season carry on to every day of the coming year. First Gen wishes the entire nation a bright future and supports every Filipino's dream by providing clean and reliable energy to power the country's progress.

First Gen

Power for the Filipino

LIFESTYLE

sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart)
or e-mail us at pr.lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

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Jenni Epperson
and Apples Aberjn-Sadhwani

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

FASHION

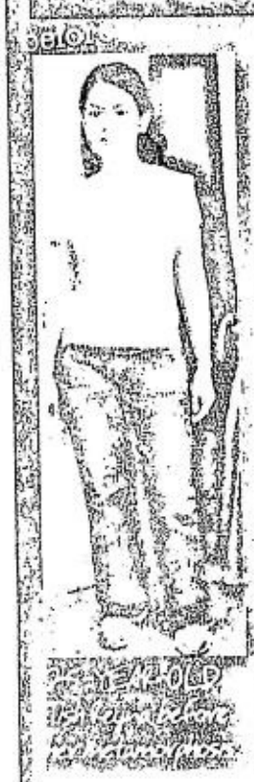
happy new YOU

IMPROVE your self-confidence with a fashion and beauty makeover p. C2

ENHANCE your bachelor vibe—from darling daddy to Hollywood hottie p. C4

REVAMP your office wardrobe with chic steals from Robinsons Department Store p. D2

Target: Tish Reyna
25 years old
Mission: from typical girl-next-door to fashionable woman-in-charge
Accomplices: Teng Roma, Jeoff Moran, Edgar Relos, Mae Mabanta and assistants Randy and Melanie, Emphasis Salon (8980818); Awake cosmetics (available in Rustan's); Iora boutique (Glorietta 2); Coco & Tres (09175771010, cocotres@gmail.com); Sapato Manila (09279148237, sapatomanila@gmail.com)



Tish the season for a makeover

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU! Now is the perfect time to make major changes in your life: clean out your closet, start an exercise regimen, get rid of that sarcastic old boyfriend or get a makeover. Or, in the case of the Straight Guy (or girl), in this case!

Tish's transformation was a collaborative effort between Emphasis Salon's creative director Teng Roma and stylist Edgar Relos. Roma supervised Tish's hair cut while interviewing her about her lifestyle and needs. The verdict: She needed an image that's stylish, modern and as fuss-free as possible. Tish has thick, beautiful hair but the style was too predictable and boring. Plus, it's just too long and heavy. Teng, Tie and Edgar cut off a good five inches of Tish's hair, thereby lightening and toning down the look.

Jeoff Moran, who's been in charge of highlighting Tish's virgin hair (it's never been colored or chemically treated), wanted to break the monotony of Tish's heavy dark color. He opted for a subtle highlight, in honey and ash, to complement the dark brown color of her hair.

While waiting for the color to develop, Mae Mabanta and assistants Randy and Melanie groomed and prepped Tish's eyebrows. Mae's expertly shaped Tish's brows and softened her look even more by tapping the eyebrows with a makeup pencil.

With the help of Awake cosmetics, Tie showed Tish how to diagonal-shade her eyelids and contour her features. Tish had been using what's left of her little makeup on the job, which was not much. Tie showed her how to apply a natural day time look, using a light shadow and a simple eyeliner.

Tie also showed Tish how to apply a natural-looking blush and how to use a lipstick to define her lips. Tie's simple addition of a dark lipstick to the lower lip made her look more sophisticated.

Everyone was completely satisfied with the results. Tish's new look is a perfect blend of her old self and her new, more confident, more sophisticated self. Tish's friends were pleased with the new look, and she was pleased with the compliments she received. Tish's boyfriend was also pleased with the new look, and he was very proud of his girlfriend. Tish herself was very happy with the new look, and she felt that it was the perfect look for her.

Metamorphosis at Emphasis

The transformation was done at Emphasis Salon, where Tish's stylists, Teng Roma and Edgar Relos, consulted with Tish about her lifestyle and needs. The verdict: She needed an image that's stylish, modern and as fuss-free as possible. Tish has thick, beautiful hair but the style was too predictable and boring. Plus, it's just too long and heavy. Teng, Tie and Edgar cut off a good five inches of Tish's hair, thereby lightening and toning down the look.

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The Apples' new clothes

[illegible] Tish's new look, she needed a new wardrobe. No problem! Tie and Edgar took her to Iora boutique, Coco & Tres and Sapato Manila to pick up some clothes that would complement her new look. Tish's friends were very happy with the new look, and they were very happy with the new look, and they were very happy with the new look.

Although we guided Tish through the process, ultimately, the goal of the makeover was for her to be personally and stylistically comfortable with the new look. Everyone was completely satisfied with the results.

Apples' Pickings

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

[illegible] makeover mission, Tish's [illegible] appearance [illegible] more confident than ever. [illegible] prospect of the best part of the whole process, of course, the changes were [illegible] that she was most comfortable with.

Most importantly, Tish realized that a makeover, start and end to end, is longer than just a new look. It's more [illegible] and [illegible] hope for.

[illegible] makeup from Awake cosmetics, a pair of [illegible] from Iora, shoes from Sapato Manila and a bag from Coco & Tres [illegible] the makeover team.

[illegible] Write to us at fashion@inquirer.com.ph and tell us why Marie should pick you for your next makeover mission!

1. STYLIST Edgar Relos chops a good five inches off Tish's extra-long locks. 2. Jeoff Moran highlights Tish's virgin hair. 3. Groomed eyebrows are a must! 4. Time for a little makeup magic.

66 happy new you is . . .

"keeping and doing your new year's resolutions ... and no cheating!"
—Anne Curtis, actress / true royal princess

Compiled by Jenni Epperson

... to continue to be myself, keeping the good points and letting them shine while rectifying the bad. To not be afraid to take big risks and win big, whether in my personal life, friendships or professional life.
—Tina Tinio, business unit manager, Shu Uemura and Kheil's / perennial people-pleaser

... knowing that I'm closer to never seeing the likes of collars popping up on polo shirts, "otso-otso" and other tunes of similar ilk, and the slow demise of Lakers/Yankees.
—Rovilson Fernandez, TV host, writer / Jedi-in-taining

...anorexic, tall and effing gorgeous.
-Bryanboy Yambao, funeral director/ internet mogul by day, human blow-up doll by night.

... not worrying about deadlines.
—Dennis Lustico, designer / seasonal cross-dresser

...professional boxer! I've been boxing for three and a half years.
-Rajo Laurel, designer / rockstar INXS wannabe

a gorgeous smile on my face.
—Kat Tantoco-Lobregat, resort wear brand manager/ designer Bustanis/ wannabe surfer chick

madly in love with hot young DJ.
Xeng Zulueta, Shu Uemura makeup artist / narcoleptic Aquarian

...tanned and loving life.
—Darren Tieste, photographer / traveling tripod

...someone ready to toss emotional baggage, expired mascara and a bad boy friend out the trash!
—Ianne Evangelista, Cosmopolitan editor in chief / dizzy DJ wannabe

...being more focused on "growing up" with my children and managing my "kids at work" for the benefit of the export industry and to put the Philippines in the forefront of design and quality merchandise amidst globalization.
—Fe Reyes, DTI-CITEM head / *tindera* of the Philippines to the world

Sony Ericsson

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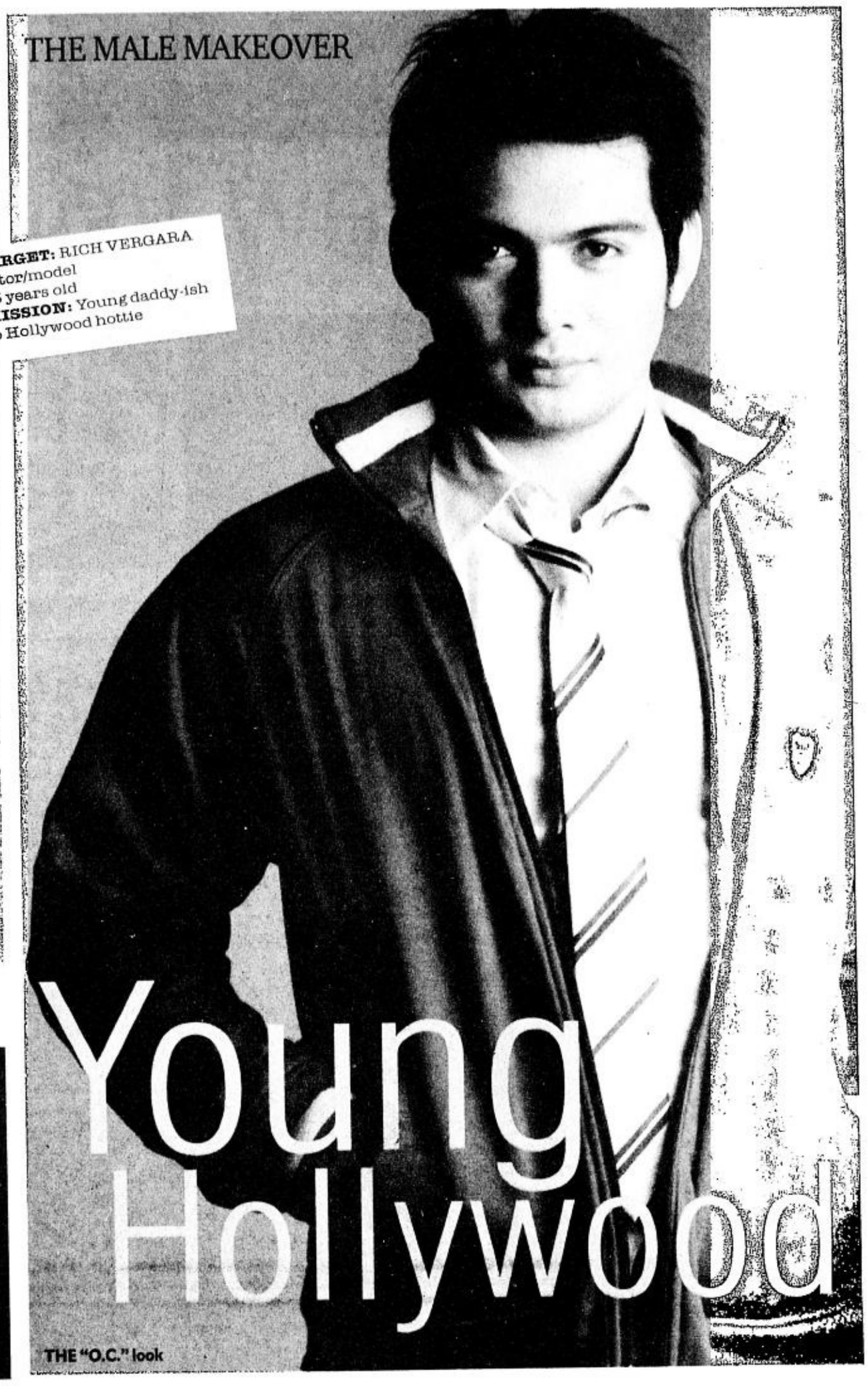
Now is the best time to subscribe to Globe. Offer is good this yuletide season only. Rush to the nearest Globe Business Center or Hub or call 751-8888 now!

"ONE Tree Hill" hunk

THE MALE MAKEOVER



TARGET: RICH VERGARA
Actor/model
23 years old
MISSION: Young daddy-ish to Hollywood hottie

Young Hollywood

THE "O.C." look

PHOTOGRAPHY RONNIE SALVACION
CLOTHES, SHOES AND ACCESSORIES FROM BENCH
HAIR PRODUCTS FROM BENCH FIX
PROFESSIONAL STYLING PRODUCTS

BENCH Fix products

By Juan Sarte III and Robbie Carmona

JUAN SAYS:

It always pays to look younger. Whether for work or for dating, a healthy, fresh and youthful appearance will always have a winning edge.

But just like there are men who look younger then their age, there are young men who look older than they really are. Some young men can be too serious and conservative. They forget that being young is a once-in-a-lifetime chance. And this I say to them: Savor the moment and look your age!

To be old happens much longer than being young. Before you rush through life and think old when you are not, remember that dressing and looking your age will always become you.

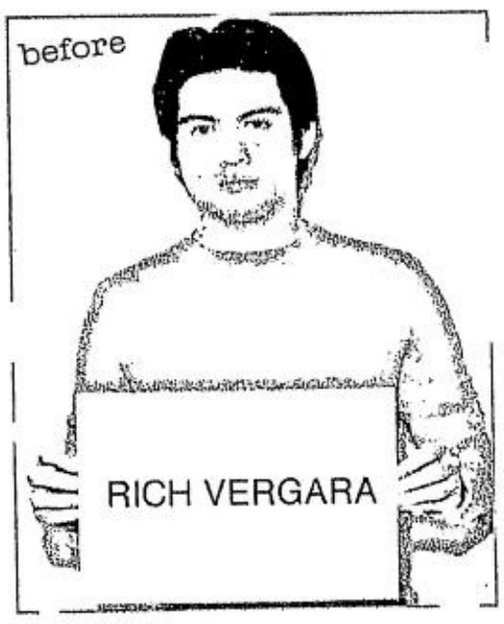
Accomplice No. 1: First Aid Salon, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City

Define the cut. The brushed-up hairstyle made Rich look like a Pinoy action star from the '80s. So Ric of First Aid Salon gave him a fresh new cut with squared-off sideburns and volume on the top. Rich's face is round-ish, so the defined edges will counter the curves while the volume on top will create a more elongated facial appearance.

Accomplice No. 2: Bench Fix professional styling products

Mess up the hair. The messed-up, natural hair we see worn by young Hollywood actors today isn't actually "natural." To achieve the look requires some procedures and hair styling products.

Bench Fix hairstyling products come in gel, wax, clay or paste forms, providing texture in different finishes and different degrees of hold. We wanted Rich's hair to look like no hair product was applied. For this, we chose the Fix Styling Stick because of its matte finish. The product was rubbed directly on the hair in a circular motion. Then, the sides were flattened and the top was scrunched and allowed to fall randomly in an artful mess.



ROBBIE SAYS:

Dressing to look young nowadays means no boundaries. Explore, mix, match or mish-mash it!

Jeans look great on almost every guy. It's also the best piece of clothing to tone down a dressy item, and makes you look young and cool with the right combination.

Choose a pair of jeans that fits well. Low-rise or hipsters are the most comfortable ones; high-waist jeans make you look daddy-ish and dated. These days, jeans that are cut close to your legs are the best. It makes your look taller and sexier. If you're not comfortable with a leg-hugging pair, comfort fit is a good option.

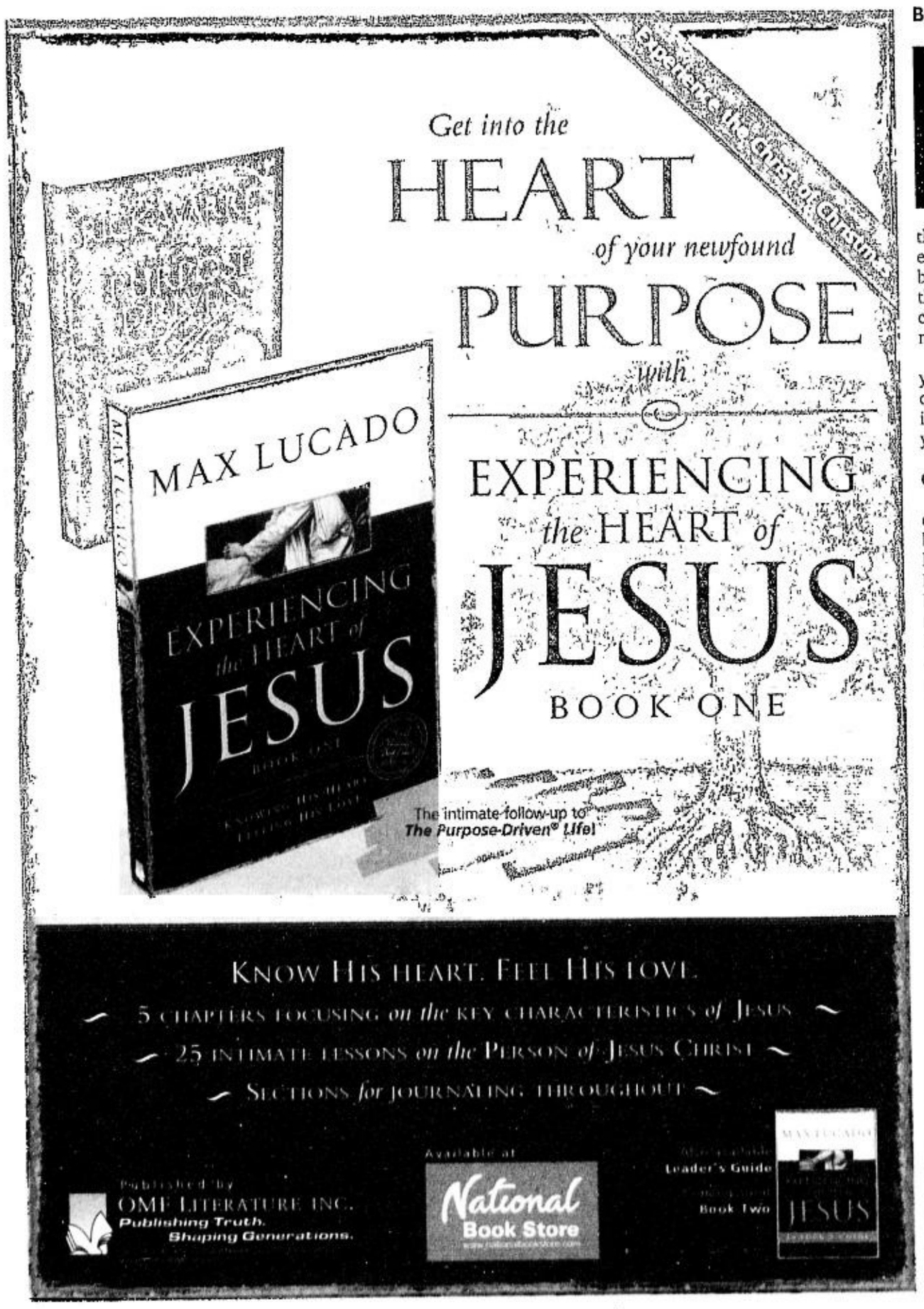
Personalize your pair. Customize or even destroy it to give it that edgy look. For a not-so-casual look, say if you're going out on a date or meeting your friends at a bar, wear a blazer over a vintage-inspired T-shirt or a button-down shirt, then pair with jeans and your ever reliable kicks. Accessorize with a trucker cap or a cool fedora to get that Ashton Kutcher look.

Set no rules! Just don't leave home without an attitude.

Accomplice: Bench

Look 1: Make a statement. Pick a conversation tee that says it all. Layer with your all-time favorite plaid button-down shirt, destroyed jeans and a red pair of sneakers. Spice it up with a trucker cap and a vintage belt.

Look 2: Track it down. Dress down your classic white button-down shirt and necktie with a sporty track jacket. Fresh and truly young.



LIFESTYLE

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Contributing editors
Jenni Epperson
and Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

FASHION

Editors' Picks

Hot handled

Jenni's pick

START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT WITH an irresistibly cool purchase. Salvatore Ferragamo's Spring-Summer handbag is the must-have investment piece for 2006. Marisa, signifying beauty, is the latest realization of premium design and craftsmanship that Ferragamo prides itself in.

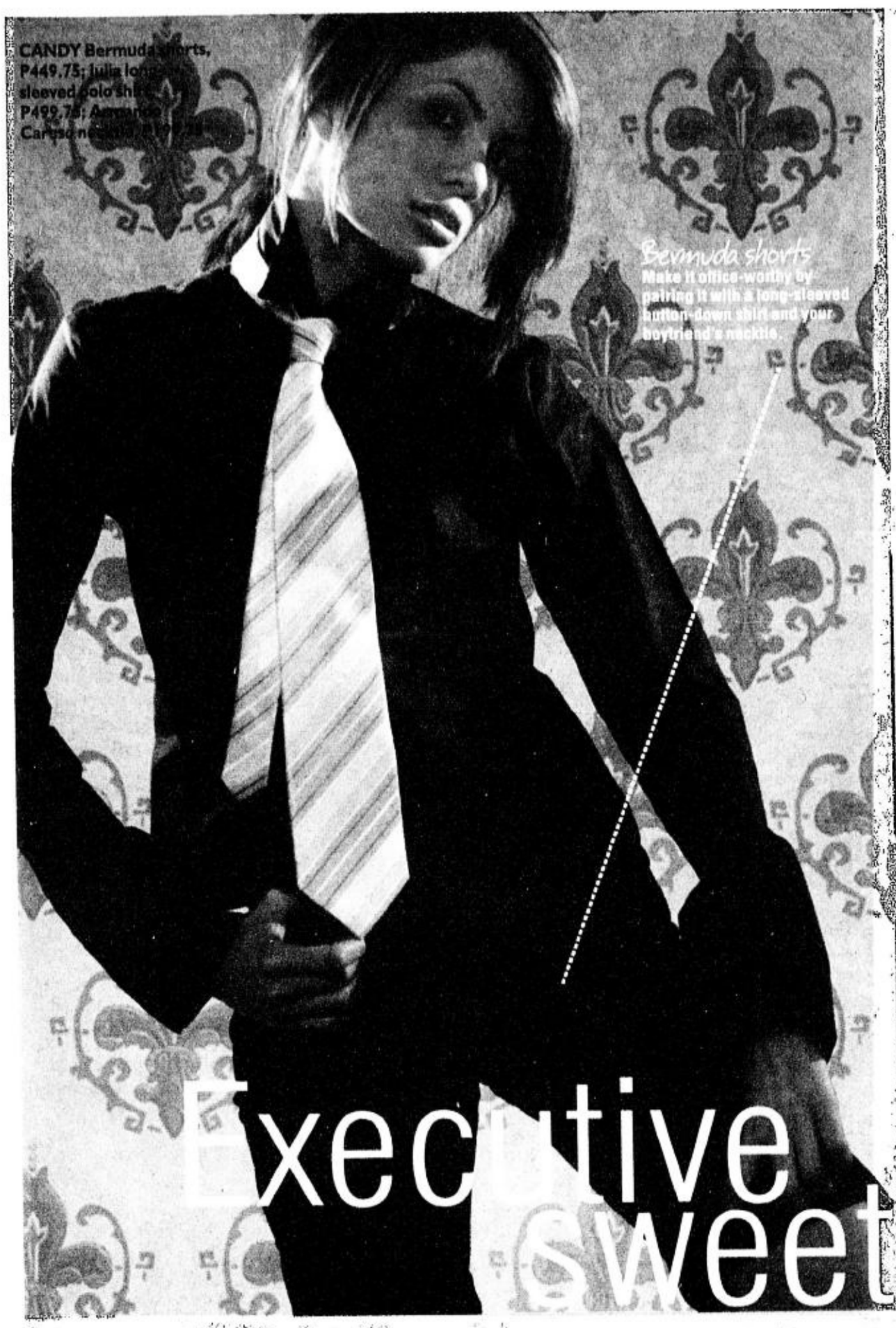
The bag is molded to follow the sensual contour of the female form, and provides women with a sensible carry-all. It's made of luxurious materials, but is created with simple distinction.

Choose from ostrich, metallised calf, mesh-work in boucle wool and crochet, or hand-painted iridescent python. With this jewel, leave behind indulgent elaboration and bag an appreciation for true form and self-expression as you greet the coming year with a big bang.

Salvatore Ferragamo is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. Shops are located at Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Greenbelt 4 Ayala Center, Alabang Town Center, Rustan's Tower, Rustan's Makati, and Rustan's Ayala Cebu.

Poker Fever

RAISE your fashion ante and hit the high notes of style as the top gun in iconic eyewear launches its holiday premium with "Ray-Ban: The Real Deal." Known as the eyewear of choice among top-rated celebrities and fashionistas, Ray-Ban will change your view of poker this holiday season. Now gaining popularity in the Hollywood scene, The Ray-Ban Celebrity Poker Challenge brings together actors, bets, bluffs, and a cause. In other words, celebrities bluff their way to winning for their chosen charities. Ray-Ban is extending this exciting experience to you. Get your very own limited-edition Ray-Ban Playing Cards for free when you purchase a pair of Ray-Ban, Killer Loop, or Arnette eyewear worth P3,990 and above from any leading department store or optical shop nationwide. Promo runs until Feb. 11, 2006.



Executive sweet

Work wear from Robinsons, so tempting it can spark gossip from cubicle to cubicle

Jenni Epperson

DERELICT BUILDINGS, maze-like cubicles, wolves dressed in power suits and the stench of day-old Lucky Me. Enter the world of the urban working bees.

For the bundy clock-bondage set, the daily grind is a drag. But out of this drudgery lies the promise of corporate salvation.

No, I don't mean the annual company outing (these days, some company outings have become cooler pool parties), but your well-dressed, fresh-grad cubicle mate (who's a whiz at mixing and matching her college clothes with her basic tailored treats) or your fashion-plate lady boss (she may be the office witch, but the way she wears her scarf makes her a doll!).

The best of everything

A lot of my inspiration when dressing up or styling comes from classic movies I order on Amazon.com. One of my favorites is Jean Negulesco's "The Best of Everything," based on Rona Jaffe's novel. It's a 1950s take on working women, secretaries in particular, as well as office politics, bosses who take advantage of their underlings, and the mores of nine-to-five working girls. The movie starred Hope Lang, Suzy Parker and the fearless Joan Crawford.

The outfits in the movie alone were enough to spark gossip from one department to the next. The ensembles were very sophisticated, chic, feminine (so as not to confuse them with being one of the big boys) yet powerful (enough to ward off fanny-pinching episodes from pigs in wool suits).

As in the movie, suits in subdued colors, tailored skirts and jackets, minimal jewelry and a go-getter attitude should be your blueprint for style success.

Joan Crawford... not!

You don't have to be a Hope Lang, a Suzy Parker or a Joan Crawford to climb your way up the corporate ladder in style. With a little inspiration, some styling tips and a penchant for corner offices, you can revamp your office wear from looking like a wrecked receptionist to a head honcho hottie!

The beauty of it all is that it won't take several months' paychecks to put together a decent wardrobe. Just spend your lunch break shopping at Robinsons Department Store and you're sure to hook chic pieces at cheap prices.

Bring home the bacon

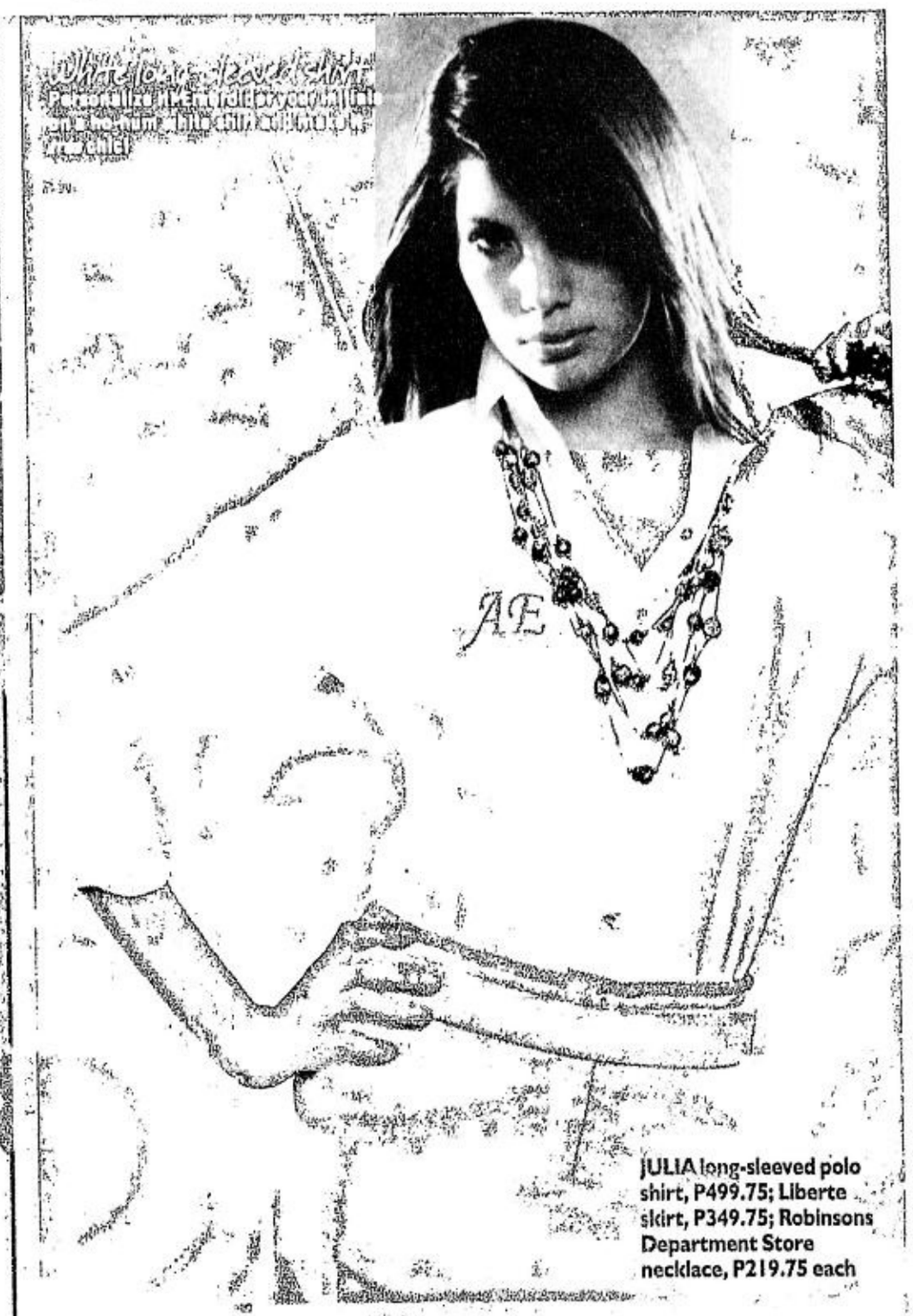
Just because work is routine doesn't mean your outfits should be, too. If anything, dressing up is what you should look forward to every morning.

Suit up in pink and coordinate (or not) your shoes and bags. Or button up a cardigan and pair it with a pencil-cut skirt. Don't forget to cinch it with a thin colorful belt.

And if you wear a uniform to the office, slip into your sexy camisole and add a playful scarf to make it your own.

See you at the snake pit!

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph



JULIA long-sleeved polo shirt, P499.75; Liberte skirt, P349.75; Robinsons Department Store necklace, P219.75 each

RD's scarf, P49.75; Julia top, P499.75; Liberte slacks, P499.75; Bess earrings, P30.95; Donna belt, P129.75

LIBERTE cropped jacket, P349.75; Candy tank top, P399.75; Fab jeans, P679.75; Bess necklace, P73.95

BERNARDO dress, P1,295; Fab jeans, P679.75; Bess necklace, P250.95 each

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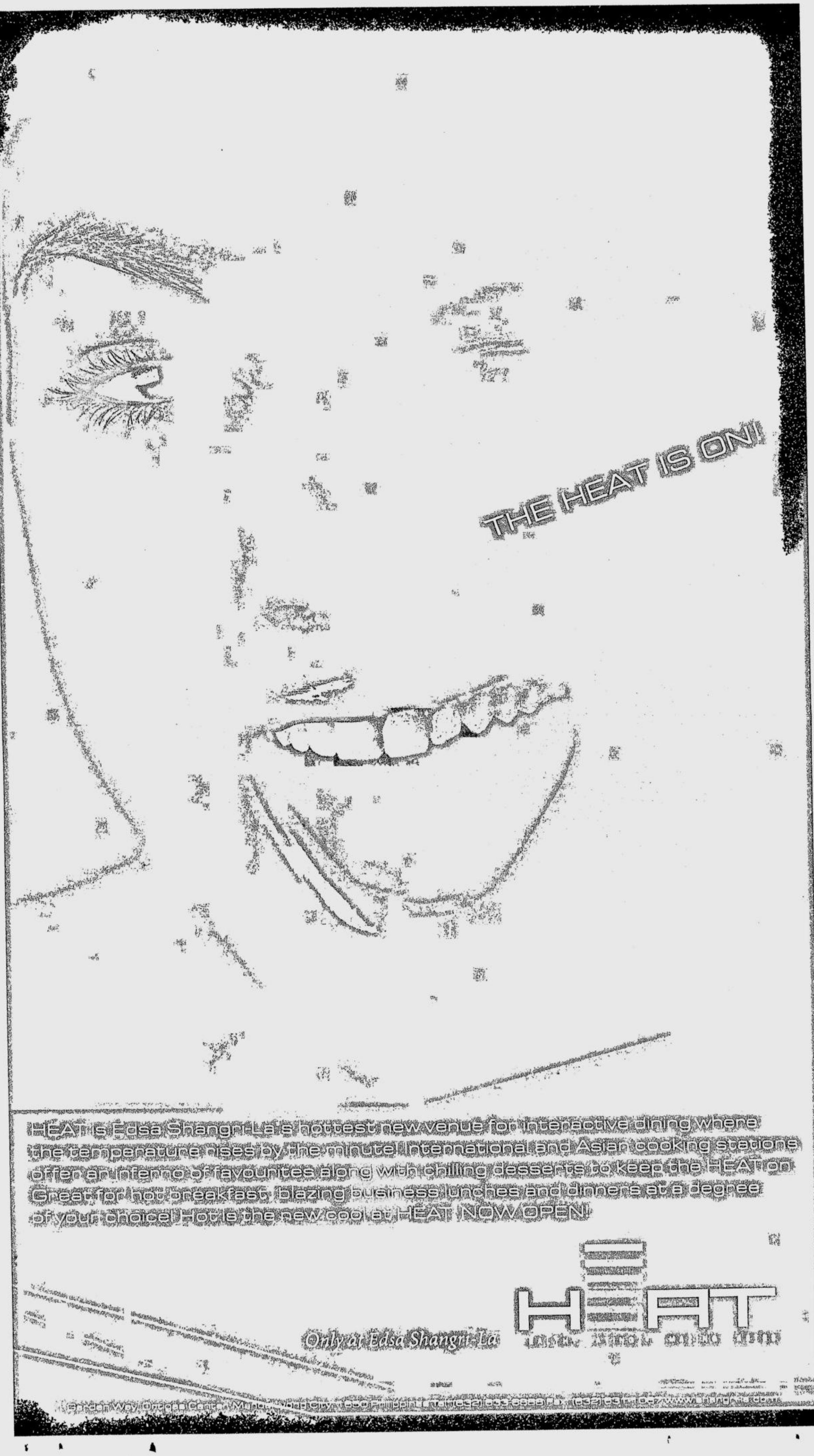
DIGITAL IMAGING ARNZ LORENZO (0919-2085558)
STYLING JENNI EPPERSON
MODEL ALEX ESCAT
MAKEUP XENG ZULUETA FOR SHU UEMURA
HAIR JANET DE RAMA
PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT KEITH LAPUOS OF PARALLAX STUDIO
CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES FROM ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT STORE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MODEL CITIZENS MODEL CITIZENS MODEL CITIZENS MODEL CITIZENS

VALERIE de los Santos

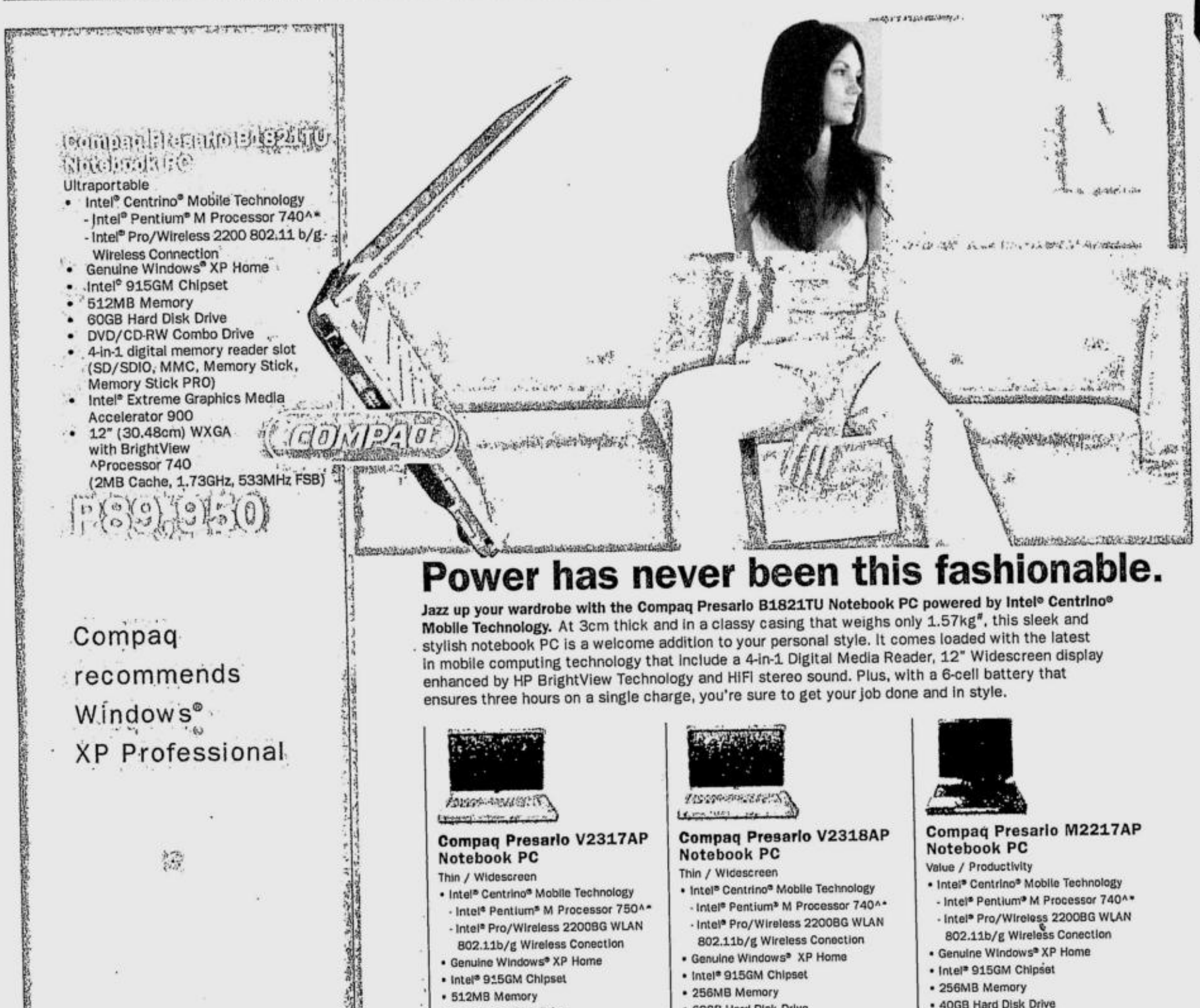
KATE Torralba with Miu Miu

Ec ectric!

Text and Photos by Kat Cruz

POWER UP THE LINES OF FASHION mavens! The vintage Bazaar at Rockwell Tent ignited an assortment of styles that defied vogue-ish boredom. With eclectic flair and a pulse for rarity that energized the place, the challenge was to break the capacity of fashion's straight-laid rules. Creating currents and jolting standards, these individuals caused dress codes to go haywire, stimulating the fun and excitement.

MIMI Sanson



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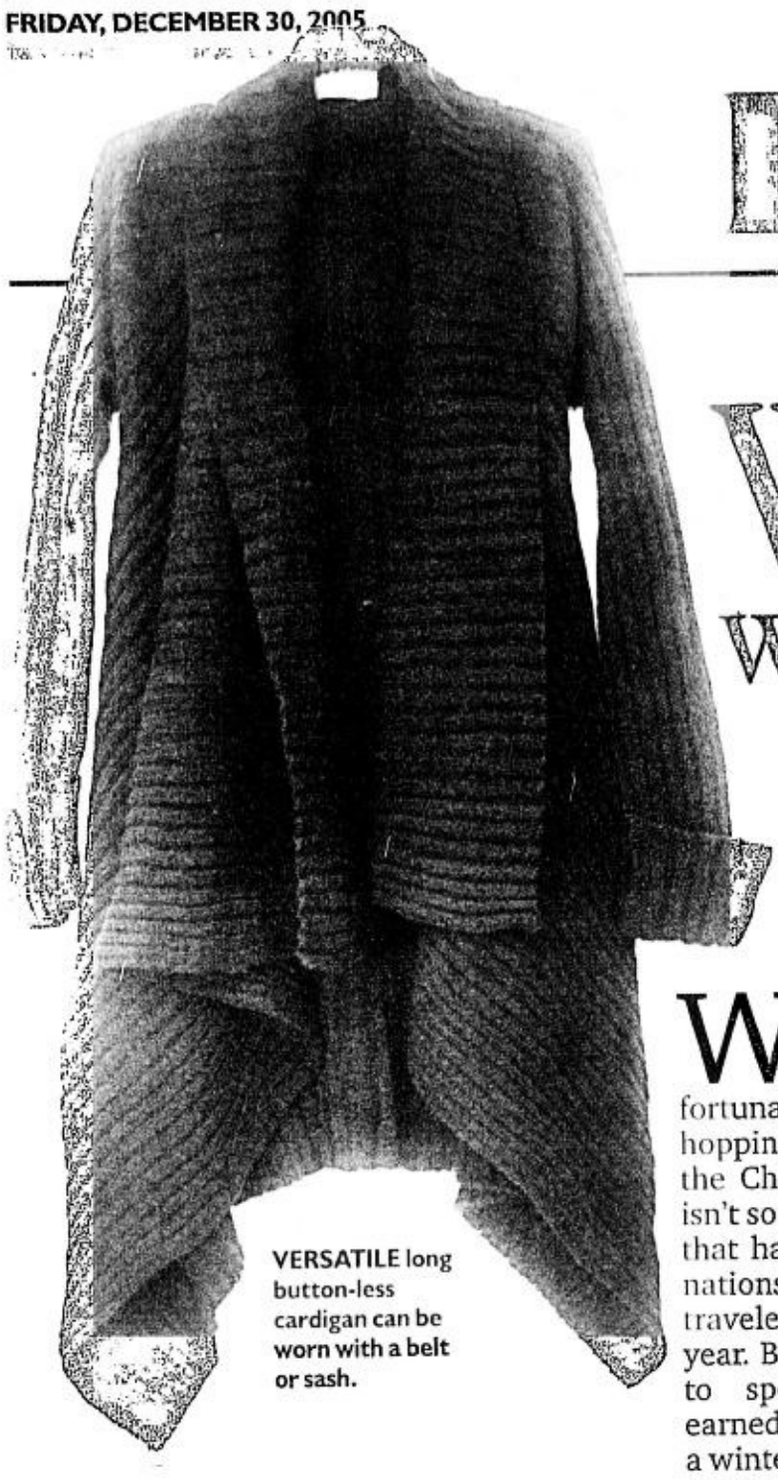
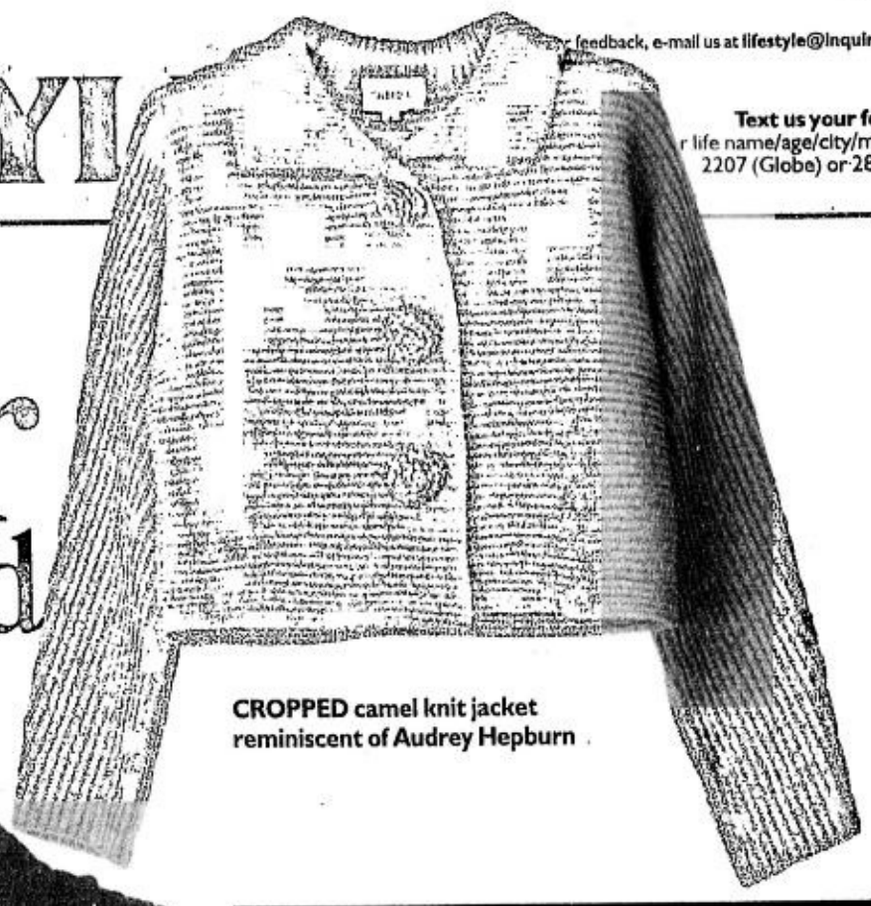
Winter wonderland wear



VERSATILE long button-less cardigan can be worn with a belt or sash.

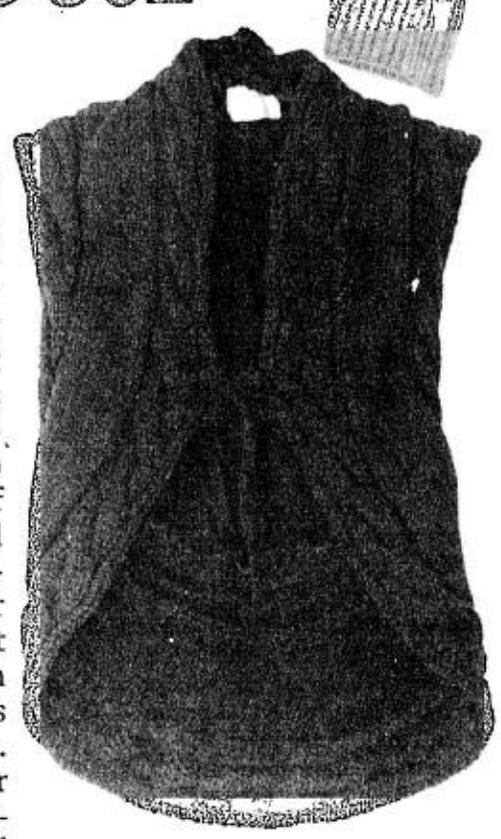


CROPPED camel knit jacket reminiscent of Audrey Hepburn

WHILE WE HERE in the Philippines are most fortunate to have beach-hopping weather during the Christmas season, it isn't so in other countries that happen to be destinations for some Filipino travelers at this time of year. But there's no need to spend your hard-earned dollars abroad for a winter wardrobe. Great options are available on our own shores, such as these spotted in Tango. Even if you stay home for the holidays, these cardigans and knitwear will combat any powerful air-conditioner.

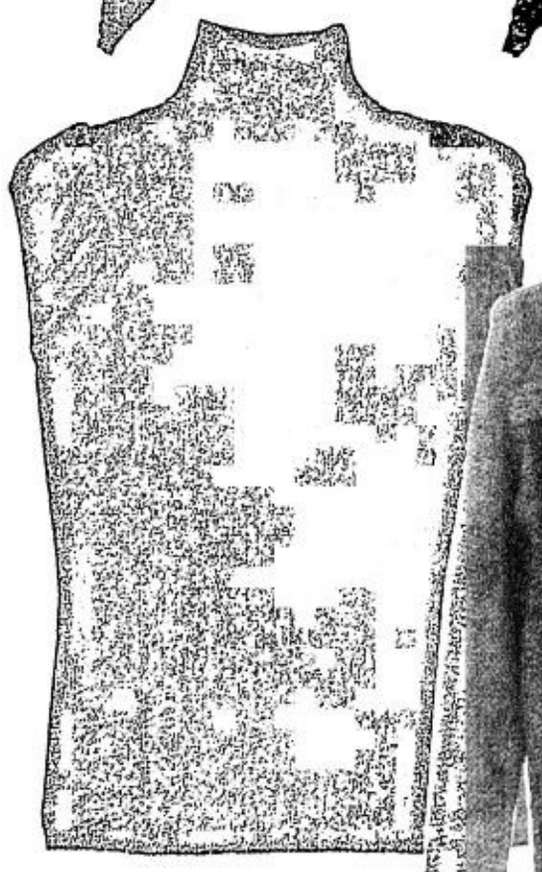
Beia Formoso

Tango stores are located in Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati, and SM Megamall.



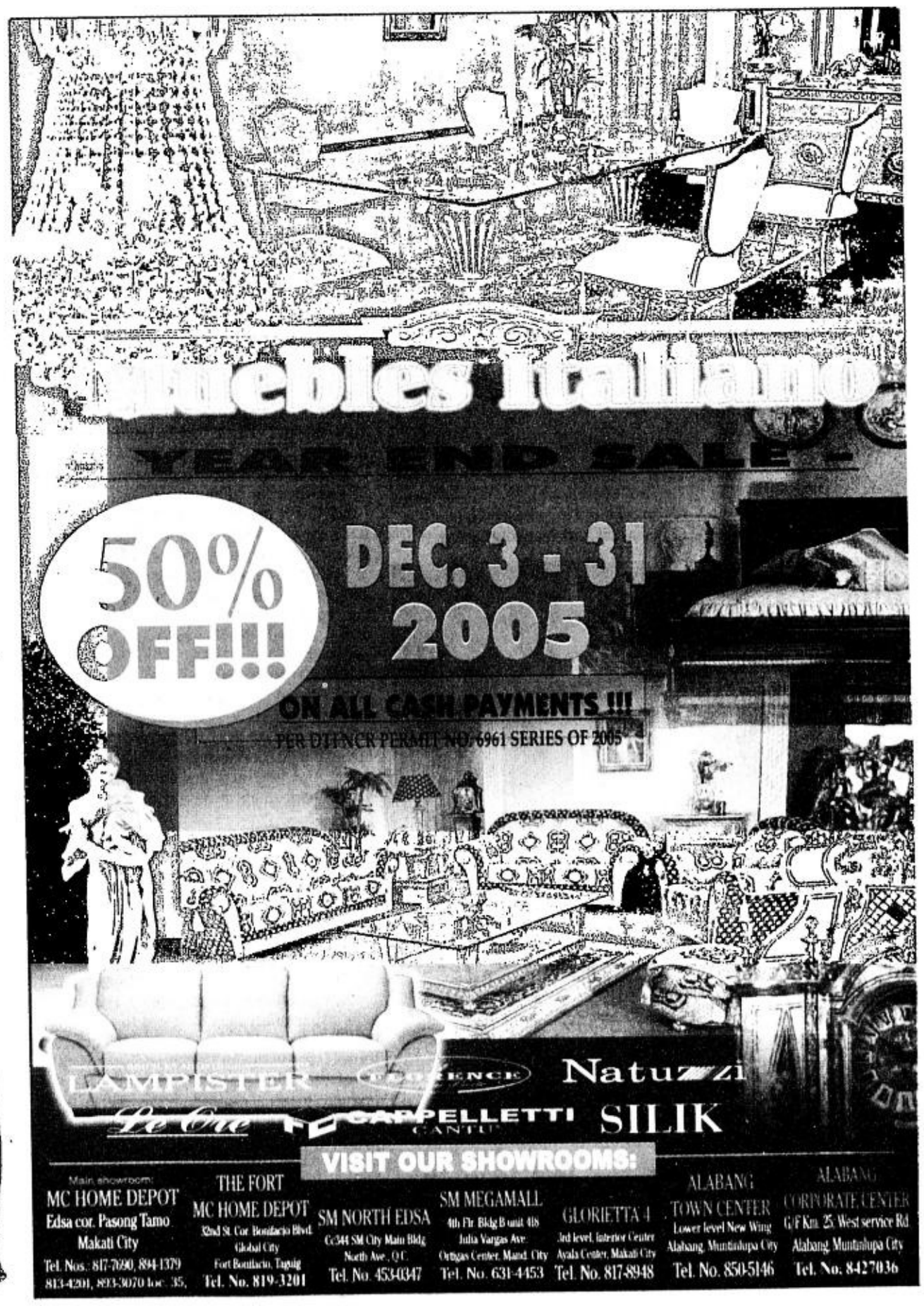
KNIT vest adds warmth and green in white snowy winter.

THE EMPIRE strikes back in this empire-cut brown knit sweater, can be worn over a ribbed tank top.



RIBBED olive turtle-neck sweater

BROWN cable knit cardigan, perfect for casual days



This holiday season, you only need one Christmas card to greet all your relatives abroad.

For only ₱4.50 per minute*. It's the lowest IDD rate you can get from a call card. Greet them a Merry Christmas and more.

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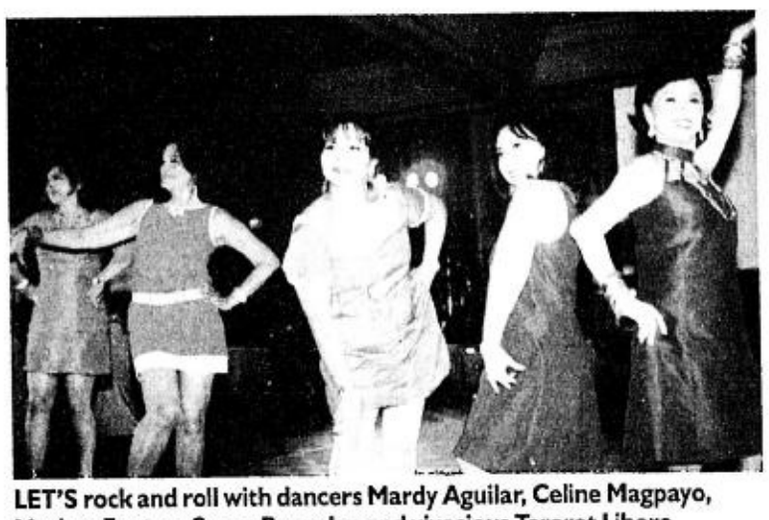
HOTEL InterContinental Grand Ballroom shake, rattle and roll: the Catholic Women's Club 84th Annual Ball has eye-catchers like Anne Marie Saguil, Sharmila Hiranand, gal of the affair Marilen Gonzallez Elizalde, Sofia Zobel Elizalde, Techie Hagedorn, president Linda Pastoral, Fiona Ottiger, Ane Preysler, Junie Peña, Ana Rocha and Nikkie Valerio

DEBBIE Yabut, BMW's Alan German and Sigalit Djemal

CWC president Linda Pastoral hands over the proceeds of the benefit event to Fr. Mario Establecida, parish priest of General Nakar, Quezon Province.

YEH YEH GALS. Mandy Taboada and Bonnie Santos

Fund-raising ball revives '60s look



LET'S rock and roll with dancers Mardy Aguilar, Celine Magpayo, Marissa Fenton, Susan Punzalan and vivacious Tereret Liboro

BUSINESS magnates Bert Basilio, Ben Pastoral, Nonoy Alidogan and vintage car collector Louie Ablaza

LET'S PARTY. Mimi Valerio, CWC president Linda Pastoral, Nenuca Blardony, Nena Casimiro, Karen Macasaet and Tessie Kabigting

MARILOU Lovina, Nene Leonor and Myrna Borromeo; (standing) Thelma Gana and Lulu Castañeda

GUESS WHO? HSBC's Warner Manning, mega businessman Patxi Elizalde, Alan German and Santi Roxas Elizalde

PILAR Singsong

NENITA Evans, Zita Feliciano and Jeannie Licuanan

LOW-PROFILE socialite Trining Corominas

DOÑAS at lunch include Morita Roces Guerrero, Jasmin Cuenca and fomer Philippine Ambassador to Spain Isabel Wilson

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CLUB'S 84th annual ball, Twist & Shout, which had as its theme The Groovy Decade of the '60s, was held at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel InterContinental.

The ball committee, *palanggas*, was chaired by **Marilen Gonzallez Elizalde**; her co-chairs were **Sofia Zobel Elizalde** and **Junie Peña**. The hardworking committee members included **Techie German Hagedorn, Fiona Ekander Ottiger, Anne Marie Robie Cheux Saguil , Ane Achaval Preysler, Nikki Valerio, Ana Lorrain Rocha** and **Sharmila Singh Hiranand**. Okay dahlings, at ease.

This smashingly successful, wild and fun ball raised funds for the construction of a community center in Gen. Nakar, Quezon Province, which was badly hit by flash floods last year. Well, with what they raised, that center would be up and ready faster than you could bat an eyelash, *palanggas*.

The highlights of the evening were the special awards presented to the individuals who went all-out for the groovy '60s look. Miss '60s of 2005 was won by *mi amiga*, **Bambi "Amiga" Harper**; Grooviest Couple were **Mr. and Mrs. Feist**; Most Elegant in '60s Look was **Kit Zobel**; Most Original in '60s Look (Male) was Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp.'s **Warner Manning** (who really looked fantastic); the Most Original in 60's Look (Female) was **Kim Lokin**; and Best '60s Hairdo was none other than **Anton San Diego**.

For more fun, a special '60s medley dance number was performed by CWC members along with the Sofia Elizalde's Steps Dance Studio dancers. The Hot Legs dancers were **Fortune Ledesma**, Kim Lokin, **Chit Gohu, Carrie Bautista**, adorable **Tereret Liboro**, vivacious **Yoli Ayson, Mimi Ilic, Susan Punzalan, Marissa Fenton** and **Mardy Aguilar**. They got tons of applause and whistles *après* their funky performance.

Then it was dance time to the '60s tunes played by the Flintstones band. In the beginning many were shy-ish to hit the dance floor first, but when cool couple HSBC Warner Manning and his wife, **Julie Manning**, jumped in and rocked, everyone followed. Now wasn't that so chic?

The 500 or so guests could have danced, danced all night. But when the lights got brighter, it was time to call it a night. But no one wanted to leave. And why not! It was definitely a fun-packed happening, all for a super good cause.

AMONG the invitees are Bert and Tess Castro.

CATHERINE Marie "Kit" Zobel de Ayala

WOMAN of style and substance Patricia Harington Ottiger

Constantino, graphic designer **Chicho Suarez**, model **Fortune Santos**, interior designer/model **Marilen Faustino**, hunk and model **Martin Jickain**, stylish **Michelle Pamintuan** and fashionista **Princess Violago**.

The Most Seven party series took off from last year's well-received seven-party concept, but this time with Mild Seven as the presenter. Each event of Mild Seven, dahlings, salutes seven individuals who have made a mark in their respective fields via a special unveiling of photographic exhibits.

Mild Seven also held a Christmas grand bash last Dec. 21 at Fiamma, natch.

BACK to the '60s. Camille Samson, Tatler's Anton San Diego and Karen Santos

TWO OF the chosen seven beautiful new faces were graphic designer Chicho Suarez and fashionista Princess Violago.

WHITE wine is their booze. Issa Reyes and Rico Cerrudo

DINGDONG Dantes and gorgeous Karylle

CHILLING IT. Tanya de los Reyes, Jade Maravillas and popular Rene Barbier's Oliva

EMBASSY'S main man Erik Cua and stylist Michelle Pamintuan

JUST PALS. Cutie del Mar (without Martin N.) with Southern gent JM Rodriguez

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

New beauties

Just when *moi* thought it was the end of the party season, there came Mild Seven Most Seven Party #4, honoring Manila's Most Beautiful New Faces. It was held at the hot new Fiamma Resto bar on Jupiter Street in Makati, *palanggas*.

The cavernous split-level hotspot was brilliantly conceived by the creators of Il Ponticello and the legendary Pravda; it was the sleek, chic backdrop for the dazzling photo exhibit by **Raymund Isaac** with Shu Uemura doing the make-up of the subjects. Epson blew up the photographs to mural size for the evening.

Naturellement, smooth red and white wine from Rene Barbier and cool sparkling Freixenet kept us all in Yuletide-y spirit, as we watched Mild Seven salute seven of Cosmo Manille's most beautiful new faces: magazine editor Bea

Golden girl

The fantastic women calling themselves "the golden girls" gave their gang mate, statuesque and elegant **Letty Santos**, a super fun birthday lunch at the popular Moritos Restaurant in Makati, *palanggas*.

It was the perfect setting for the lunch bunch who came in their bright-colored summer outfits. Dressed in eye-catching greens, red and golds, they were seated around lush greenery and equally lush table arrangements.

Après the excellently prepared lunch and a promise to go on a diet the next day, the golden gals went home with a surprise gift, a gold box wrapped up in blue ribbons, meticulously prepared by talented **Betsy Romualdez Quisumbing**, no less.

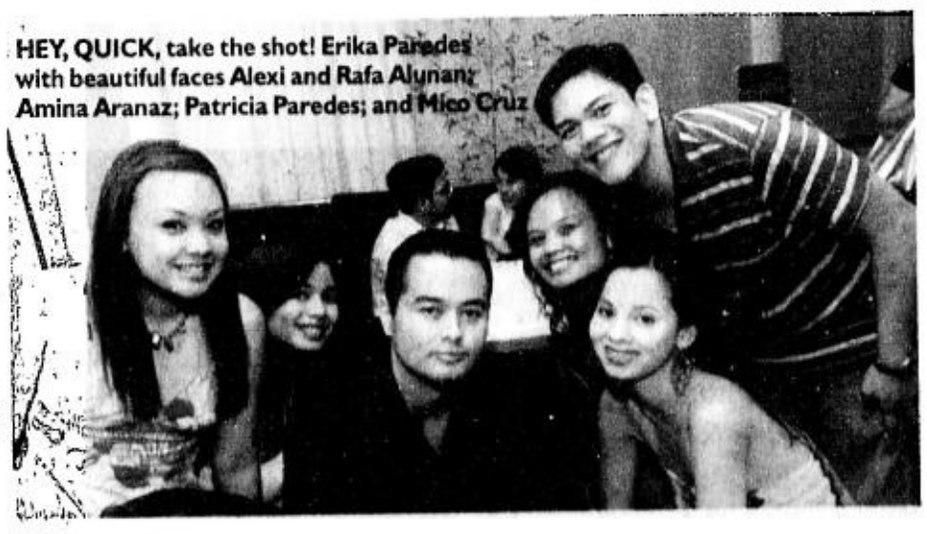
Not to be outdone, another gang of her special pals treated Letty S. to a birthday lunch at Shangri-La Makati's so popular Shang Palate. They were **Buda Samson, Britta Quisumbing**, world-class jeweler **Liding Oledan**, old-wealth socialite **Ising Madrigal Vazquez, Chloe Periquet**, statuesque **Zita Feliciano**, vivacious **Offie Recto, Nene Earnshaw**, super fun **Josie Vergel de Dios** and **Melinda Orosa**, dahlings.

Greetings

Here's wishing all my *palanggas* a very healthy, happy, awesome New Year. May all your wishes and dreams come true.

THE GOLDEN GALS. Melinda Orosa, Loleng Panlilio, queen of the hour Letty Santos, Josie Vergel de Dios and Madeleine Lim

HEY, QUICK, take the shot! Erika Paredes with beautiful faces Alexi and Rafa Alunan; Amina Aranaz; Patricia Paredes; and Mico Cruz



A doubly rewarding Christmas for shoppers

GOINGS ON

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Visit www.citibank.com.ph.

PARADE. On Dec. 30, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall will have a parade of mascots around the mall at 5 p.m. Candies and other sweet items will be given away to kids. At 7 p.m., Mike Bon, SixCyclemind, Faith Cuneta and the Raging Divas will perform at the Open Car Park. See this year's winners of the Generation East Model Search, the Search for Little Stars, Gay Queen of the East and Mr. and Ms. Sexy Body as they greet and thank patrons for another successful year at Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall. A display of colorful fireworks to usher in the new year will also be held at the Open Car Park.

ONE-STOP BAZAAR. Gateway Mall, Araneta Center's flagship shopping destination, is holding a grand bazaar until Jan. 8 at the cinema level. Everything Christmas Holiday Bazaar offers toys, fun collectibles, decor, home furnishings, gifts and baked goodies. Participating exhibitors include Timezone, Toytown, Humor Post, Kids Depot, Comic Ally, Maxiworks, Papemelroti, Gift Box, Geuel, Bravo and Mary Grace.

FIREWORKS. The 1st World Pyro Olympics will be held at The Esplanade (behind SM Mall of Asia) in Pasay City. It's the first annual competition among the most prestigious fireworks companies in the world. Nine countries—China, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, Australia, South Korea, United Arab Emirates and South Africa—are participating on Dec. 30 in the joint fireworks display. Organizer is La Mancha Pyro Productions.

FIREWORKS, TOO. There will be a fireworks display on Dec. 31 at The Strip at Starmall Las Piñas. Enjoy a night out with friends at Dencio's, Gloria Maris, Mark's Sports Bar and Figaro. Shows start at 9 p.m. Starmall Las Piñas is located at CV Star Ave., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City (8725249).

ANNIVERSARY. The parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, of the Diocese of San Fernando City, La Union, will be celebrating its Golden Foundation Anniversary on Sept. 8, 2006. Special activities are lined up for the occasion, including a feeding program for children, free baptism, wedding and anointing of the sick and the aged, and a medical and dental mission, among others. A Kankanen (native delicacy) Festival, Flores de Mayo Festival, Rambak Family Festival and Sports Festival for the youth will also be held. The yearlong celebration, headed by Rev. Fr. Julius Bancifra, will kick off on Sunday, Dec. 31. Call or text 0917-5642624.

Bags galore

A BAG IS NOT JUST SOMETHING to tote around these days. It's also a fashion statement. Their varied colors and styles make them great for enhancing one's look and personality. This is why Guess has come up with a whole new line of suede bags especially this holiday season that will make you stand out and carry you from one busy day to another. Carry on!

Leave something for yourself

From page E4

us, her former students, to learn to "live in the moment." You'll never get it unless you read the poem in whole, but I'm nonetheless lifting a line from it, how to be present in the moment: "It takes some time to get into it no matter how much hurry I make...."

The book is like a gulp of Gatorade for us people on the go, stuck on an overdrive, way past exhaustion. If you're sick and tired of a milieu that thrives on hype and fluff, and on shallowness, her poems are food for your mind that has forgotten to go deep.

Sister Emma and we, her former students, have been through exciting times—from the activism years in the '70s to the era of liberation theology after that, and into the all-encompassing awareness of the spiritual and the universe in the '90s. Like many nuns at St. Theresa's, she has always welcomed challenges, never fearing crossing into new frontiers. No fear of learning and experiencing—that's what we got from that great school.

In 2002, she asked me to join her on a six-month stay in a 62-acre farm in New South Wales, Australia, at the Tabgha Centre for Ecology and Spirituality. There, she said, we could live close to nature and join such programs as "Emerging Spirituality" and "Being at Home in the Cosmos." It was not your traditional vacation obviously. Of course, I couldn't join her, I had my own "corporate cosmos" to run.

These poems were written during her exhilarating and "mind-boggling" stay on that farm. I suspect she also wrote them for people like us who don't even have the time to look up in the sky and see the stars. The rare time I saw stars was when a tennis ball hit me smack on the forehead, bad net player that I was.

Her point is, the universe is pouring out so much—in learnings, blessings, whatever. Catch them, get them, leave some for yourself. Happy new year!

(The book is available at Chito Vijandre and Ricky Toledo's Firma in Greenbelt.)

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FOR MOM

FOR ATE

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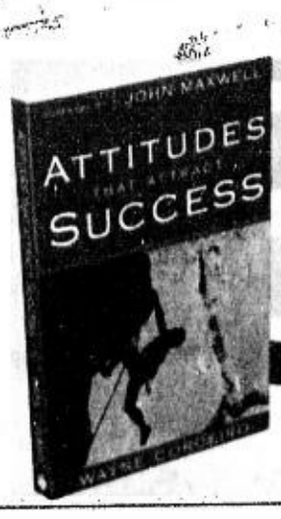
HIYAS A gem of a book!

FOR BUNSO



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FOR KUYA

FOR DAD

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Leave something for yourself

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

CAUGHT IN THE EDSA JAM OVER THE holidays, my former teacher, surrogate mom and life-long friend, Sr. Emma Vijandre, ICM, turned to a frazzled me and said, "You're pouring out too much."

Huh? I had to ask her to explain since Edsa traffic wasn't exactly conducive to reflection. "It's all going out, nothing pouring in."

What she meant was I had been expending too much time, energy, emotion, whatever—and hardly imbibing anything. And that may hold true for many of us. It's an odd twist to the traditional thought that this is the season of giving; for a change, how about taking something for yourself?

Indeed, what a contrarian but nonetheless genuine thought for the new year. We lead harried lives, living on overdrive. We're into everything, at the same time we're after so many things, we expend too much. We give too much—our physical and mental space—for our family, our career, our social network, our relationships. Yet, I now find myself asking, what's left for myself?

As always, Sister Emma, who was our teacher at St. Theresa's, hit us right on the mark. All these years she's had an uncanny way of defining just where we are in our life. (Of course, it helps that she's a psychologist.) And where are we exactly? A generation that's hooked on the "purpose-driven life" could be overdosing on "purpose," meaning it finds itself running after too big a goal, or worse, too many goals in life, so much so that it sees only the finish line, but not the body/spirit that may or may not make it to the finish line. In short, we don't see enough of ourselves. We're so wrought up in commitments that we hardly look into ourselves.

Even when pouring out, make sure you leave something for yourself.

In simple, blunt terms, it means I'll be giving to myself this year, looking into and after myself, for a change. I'll have time for myself. Selfish? No, just self-enhancing. It's high time.

Poetic reflections

By the way, Sister Emma has just published her book of poems which you will surely find self-enhancing. Titled "The Poet Dances," it's a perfect trigger for reflection for it gives you new insight about yourself and the universe around you.

The poems help you grapple with your realities. My favorite has always been "Live the Moment," which dovetails with her advice to

LEAVE/ E3

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Experience fully-loaded freebies, perks and more

Enjoying fully-loaded convenience is just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak - there's so much more. If you're an SM shopper, you're really going to fall in love with this. Your Express Teller card automatically entitles you to join EXPRESS REBATE, EXPRESS PRIZE at SM Department Stores.

When you make any EPS transaction with your Express Teller card at any SM Department Store from October 8 to December 8, 2005, you get to enjoy a 1% rebate on your purchases. The rebate is automatically applied to your EPS purchases.

Savings and dates at the movies

More than that, a minimum of P7,000 worth of accumulated or single-receipt EPS transactions during the promo period will entitle you to two (2) free Premier SM Movie Cards. You can redeem your Premier Movie Cards at BPI branches or Express Banking Centers located within the SM Malls be representing the EPS transaction slips by and your BPI Express Teller card.

To get you ticket, proceed to any SM Cinema ticket booth and surrender the Premier Movie Cards, SM Cinema ticket booths are open Mondays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the following SM Malls: SM Megamall, SM Manila, SM Southmall, SM Fairview, SM North Edsa, SM San Lazaro, SM Bicutan, SM Sucat, SM Centerpoint, SM Bacoor, SM Pampanga, SM Marilao, SM Dasmariñas, SM Lucena, SM Baguio, SM Batangas, SM Iloilo, SM Davao, SM Cebu and SM Cagayan de Oro.

The free Premier SM Movie Cards are accepted in any SM Cinema nationwide for one time use only at any regular screening schedule. Movie cards are not allowed during Advanced Screenings.

Discounts and freebies at selected establishments

Aside from SM Department Stores, you still get to enjoy perks - EPS POWER PERKS, that is, from other stores.

Simply visit and use EPS at the following establishments to enjoy power perks such as discounts and free premium items or free service:

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Ayala Museum
David's Salon and Red Salon
Fino Leatherware
Folded & Hung
Goodwill Bookstore
Island Cove Resorts
Jelly Bean Fashion
JF Lazartigue
K & Company
Penstar Sports/Lacoste Footwear
Powerbooks
Prettyfit and Beetlebug Boutique
Red Ribbon Bakeshop
The Suriya Spa
True Value Hardware

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Want to win half a million pesos? Use your Express Teller card for your purchases.

With BPI EPS' P500,000 Rush Promo, your P500 single receipt EPS purchase from August 11, 2005 to May 15, 2006 earns you a chance to win P500,000 cash to be accredited to your account.

There will also be 3 winners of P50,000, ten winners of P5,000 worth of gift certificates from Robinsons, while lucky cardholders will win a P1,000 gift certificate from Red Ribbon.

Truly without equal

The best thing is that all these perks and privileges are now available to you when you open a BPI Express Teller Savings Account at an amazingly low P500 initial deposit

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Contributing Editor
Ria Francisco-Prieto

E-mail me at
rbeauty@inquirer.com.ph

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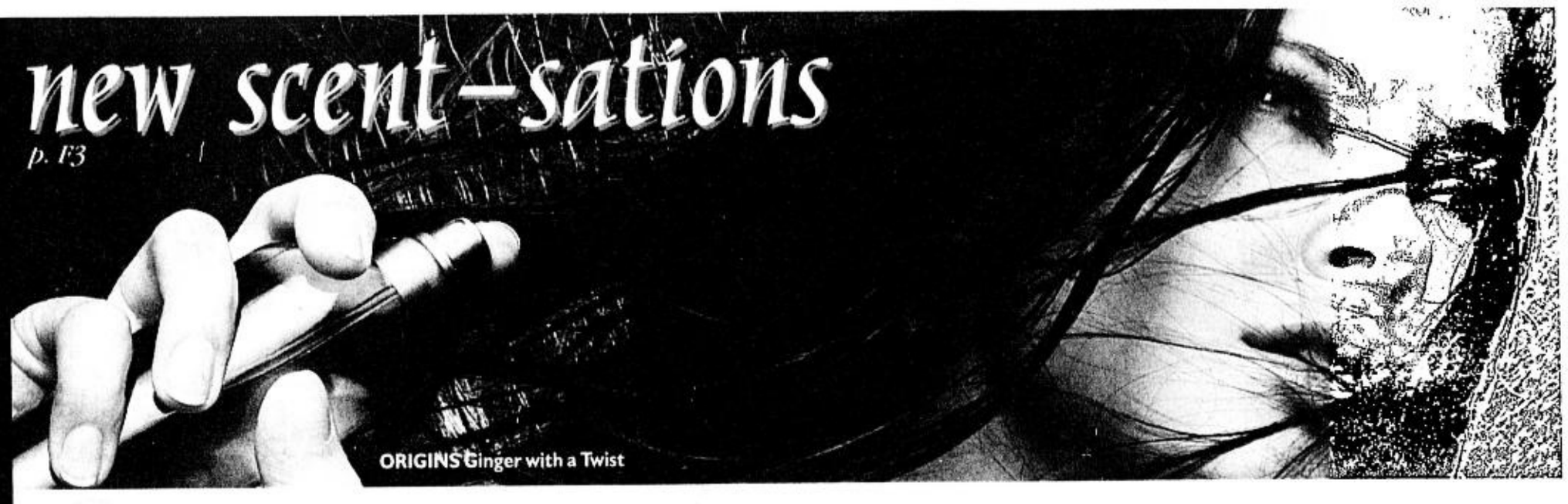
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

BEAUTY



Photography Mark Nicdao for Edge of Light 0921-6005175
Makeup Steven Doloso 0916-3748046
Hair Barney Aguilar 0915-9007884
Styling Ria Francisco-Prieto
Model Maike Evers

Fresh Look

WHENEVER I SEE OLD PICTURES OF myself the past holidays, I notice the look of fatigue on my face. The dress may be flashy and the makeup of the best quality, but my eye-bags are the real standout. Because of the early-morning Mass, the deadline rush, Christmas shopping, parties, entertaining, and personal errands, my face just caved in.

I consulted with Dr. Joey Muñoz of the Belo Medical Group regarding removing my eye-bags and it turns out I did not need surgery. Eye-bags, according to Muñoz, are not my problem, but strained under-eye muscles.

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

Now the warning: like other Botox procedures, you cannot lie down for four hours, bow, bend downwards, lie on your stomach. No strenuous activity is allowed. No carrying heavy objects for a couple of days.

I saw the photos and there really was a difference. You would never know I averaged three hours of sleep daily from Dec. 15-25 judging by how fresh and rested I looked.

No slacking off

Be aware, though, that just because Christmas has passed does not mean you can slack off. That is just a warm-up. There is, of course, New Year's Eve and Day where we seem to eat and especially drink more alcohol and spend sleepless nights. The deadly combination of sleep deprivation compounded by alcohol, sugar, fireworks pollution and preservatives in food are the quickest way to premature aging of the skin.

Sugar and alcohol will cling to the cells and break down the collagen and elastin fibers that keep the skin firm and young-looking. It throws off the skin's natural balance as well so your pores will gape open, zits will increase, cheeks and jaw line will sag and other areas will look dehydrated and feel uncomfortable.

Excessive food will also cause the face to swell. January is an in-demand marriage month in this country and chances are 75 percent of you will be invited to at least one big wedding.

My quick and painless fix for such an emergency occasion when my face is not looking its best for some reason is booking a Power Peel and a Cosmecanique Lift 6 session on the day of the special occasion itself.

The Power Peel is a method of microdermabrasion, which exfoliates the dead skin cells to make pores look smaller, evens out skin tone, mattifies the oily portions of the skin, gives cheeks a pink flush and makes the skin feel and look porcelain smooth all in 30 minutes maximum. There is no unsightly obvious peeling or redness and discomfort.

Cosmecanique Lift 6 is a relaxing and addicting kneading and massaging motion for the face which improves blood circulation. This results in firmer, tighter and younger-looking skin. Jaw line and cheekbones are more defined and skin has this certain glow.

Long-term use of Cosmecanique has been known to postpone facelifts in women as late as their 60s.

It requires patience though as it takes a total of 12 sessions done in thrice a week intervals to firm up the facial muscles and improve skin quality long term. One session's effects only lasts about two or so days.

E-mail the author at kinnysalas@yahoo.com
Call 8442939 or e-mail info@belomed.com

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HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're talented and capable. You're a combination of whimsy and practicality. You don't like waste or mess. You prefer elegant simplicity. You're quick to see the most efficient way to do something. You need to be your own boss. Major changes can take place this year. If so, they could be as significant as whatever transpired in 1997.

Birthdate of: Kristin Kreuk, actress; Douglas Coupland, writer; Tiger Woods, golfer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is the perfect day to think about how to improve relations with parents, bosses and authority figures in your life. Examine your attitude toward authority.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Because today is the New Moon, it's a good time to think about what you really believe in. It's easier to live life with guidelines that are wise and beneficial to all.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're concerned with the values of others. This might be about shared property or different approaches to something. Examine your style of handling this.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today's New Moon is opposite your sign. This is the perfect time to think about how to improve your closest relationships. What's one little thing you can do? Why not do it?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're royal nobility. (Leo rules royalty.) You take pride in running a good show. Think of what you can do to get better organized so that you have more free time.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Each New Moon is an opportunity to begin new habits and attitudes. This New Moon focuses on children, the arts and playful times. Give these areas some special thought.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Today's New Moon urges you to think of ways to improve your relations with family members and to improve how you relate to your home. Are you happy to come home each day?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): How are your relations with siblings and neighbors? What can you do to improve your interactions with daily contacts?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Money issues are growing in your mind now. Examine your attitude about money and your possessions. Do you own your possessions, or do they own you?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today's New Moon occurs in your sign. This is the perfect time to adopt new resolutions about how to improve your appearance and cultivate an image that is current and with the times.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Although it's important to network with others and enjoy friendships, it's also important to become friends with yourself. How do you handle solitude?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day to examine the role that friends play in your life. What kind of friend are you? Would you want yourself for a friend? (Think about it.)

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 "Farmer in the Dell" character
5 Main theme
10 Stare stupidly
14 Flimflam
15 Standard offshoot
16 Singer Redding
17 Prepositional 1954 movie
20 Tyler of "Ghost Whisperer"
21 Deep ditch
22 Cayenne-rich cuisine
25 Greek letter
27 Average grade
28 Reply to "That ain't true!"
30 Floral garland
31 Drop the ball
32 __ at windmills
33 Word
37 Diminutive ending
38 Poet's Muse
39 Basilica area
43 Ms. Dandridge
45 Statuesque
46 Wall St. wheeler-dealer
49 Box: abbr.
50 Bicarb ingredient
52 Old French coin
53 Uses an axe
56 Belligerent chauvinist
57 Mouth organ?
59 Davenport man
61 Prepositional 1981 movie
66 Spill the beans
67 Formula Western
68 Mark's replacement?
69 Sightseers?
70 Blueprints
71 Meg or Jeri

DOWN
1 Personal question?
2 Charged particle
3 Blubber
4 Way weary
5 Gullets
6 Nebraska city
7 Wreck beyond repair
8 Lemieux milieu
9 Prepositional 1991 movie
10 Clinton's veep
11 Without delay
12 Lobster claw
13 Swimmer Williams
18 Frankfurter's one
19 Slight of build
22 Summon to court
23 Persisting
24 Leave at the altar
26 "The Bell Jar" writer
29 Prepositional 1987 movie
34 Town on the Penobscot
35 Mouser
36 Sup
40 Tylenol's target
41 Fake coin
42 Ticklish Muppet
44 Happen
46 Perspicacious
47 "60 Minutes" curmudgeon
48 Fardel
51 Neighbor of Santa Barbara
54 Pitiful artwork?
55 Philosopher Kierkegaard
58 Solidifies
60 Armed conflicts
62 Prince of Broadway
63 Broker's advice
64 Man-mouse tie
65 Got the gold

By Henry Hook
Brooklyn, NY
12/30/05

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

A	C	H	E	D		A	D	A	M		T	B	A	R
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C	R	O	O	N		T	E	A	R		T	H	A	N
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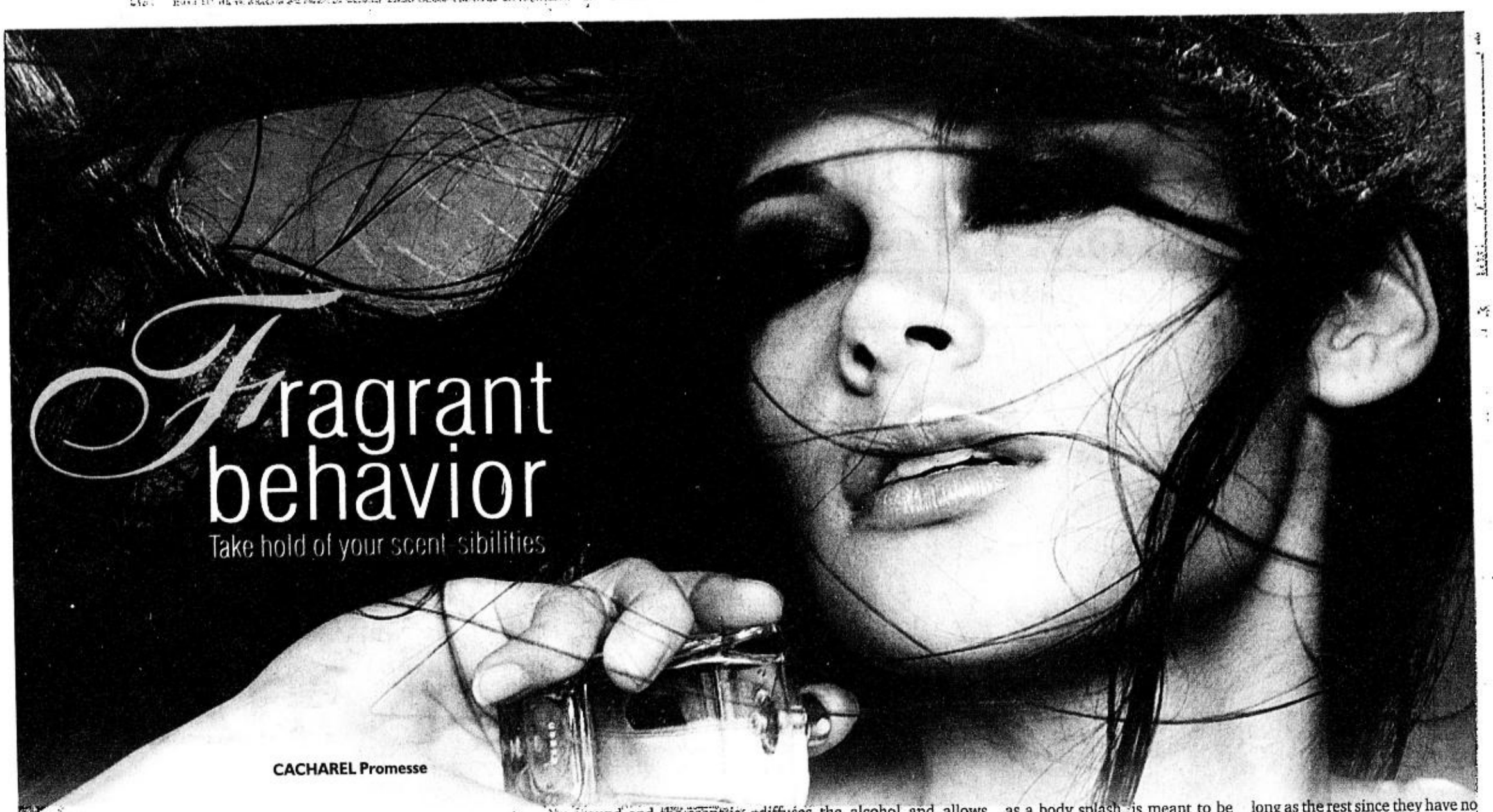
12/30/05

Fragrant behavior

Take hold of your scent-sibilities



CACHAREL Promesse

By Ria Francisco-Prieto

THERE IS SOMEthing about the New Year that makes you want to do something new for yourself. I think it's great that once a year, people take the time to look back and make a change for the better. The New Year, after all, is a time for hope and self-improvement.

Most people are guilty of hanging on to their "signature scent." Not that it is bad, but honestly, why not give other scents a chance?

For people fearful of trying out something new, I think fragrance is a zero-risk reward. You don't even have to spend much. Just walk around the fragrance counters of your favorite department store, Rustan's for example, and sample the scents.

What I like to do is have the sales persons spray the scents on the testers. If I like the scent, I have them sample it on my wrist. If I don't like it, then the tester gets clipped on the page of my planner. Which works well, too, because my planner starts smelling like heaven. So do my bag and everything inside because of the different samples I dump inside.

I test at least three scents on my skin and then wander around the cosmetic counters to check out what's new. After about 30 minutes, I smell the scents on me again and ask the opinion of whoever I'm with.

Since fragrance is composed of different scents, the cardinal rule is to really try it before you buy. You won't know how a fragrance will react to your body chemistry until you wear it.

To avoid getting dizzy and not being able to smell after an overload of scents during the testing, I bring coffee beans in a little container which I sniff to neutralize the smell.

Ginger with a twist

Origin's newest scent takes the brand's popular ginger fragrance and combines it with refreshing green lime, a twist of orange and a squeeze of tangy grapefruit.

I wasn't so gung-ho just because of the name because I was thinking that the last thing I wanted was to smell like the kitchen. But surprise of surprises, it has now become one of my favorite scents!

On me, the new Origin actually smells clean and I feel fresh every time I spray it. It honestly is like drinking a glass of Coke on a hot day. The experience is so refreshing I have become so addicted to it that I need a whiff of it at least once a day.

Cacharel Promesse

Made for a sensual and radiant woman in mind, Promesse's scent is fruity and floral. It brings a promise of fantasy, commitment and happiness.

I love the bottle of Promesse, it is elegant and feminine; it will look good on top of any dresser.

Promesse also has a body lotion, which is great since it allows you to layer the scent, making it last longer.

Beach fragrance

This light scent by Bobbi Brown is designed with notes of sand jasmine, sea spray and mandarin. It is a scent you can wear anytime.

Even the way it is bottled is perfect for even your small evening bag. I love that it is easy to carry around and the scent is clean, almost like you just stepped out of the shower.

Kinds of fragrances

In a cosmetic counter there are different types of fragrances. Perfumes are the most concentrated formula it has at least 20 percent essential oils. This scent would last four to six hours. It yields the best results when used with an atomizer since the spraying action diffuses the alcohol and allows the fragrance to adhere to the skin.

Eau de parfums are 10 percent essential oils and may last four to five hours. They are good for layering and can be used as base. Just make sure you are using products with the same scent.

Eau de toilette has five percent essential oils and lasts two to four hours.

Eau de fraiche, better known as a body splash, is meant to be applied right after bathing.

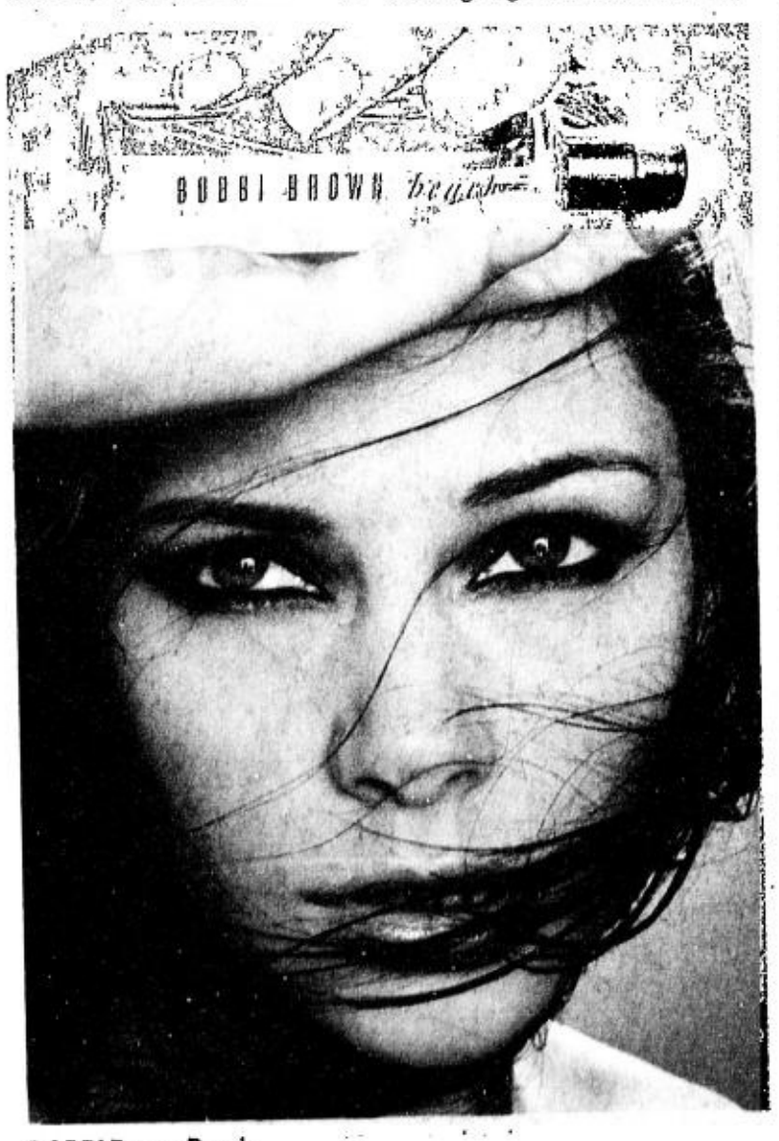
Normally, these products come with a bath gel and lotion to help prolong the scent.

Cologne has two to three percent essential oils and lasts two hours. You may apply this liberally since the scent is normally mild and never made to be overpowering.

Perfume oils are strong on initial application but don't last as long as the rest since they have no alcohol fixatives. Personally, I love how they feel on the skin.

So if you don't have a New Year's resolution in mind, try a change in scent. I'm not telling you to ditch your signature scent, but it is always good to add to that element of surprise and mystery this coming 2006. Even if it means just being open to a new fragrance.

Happy New Year!



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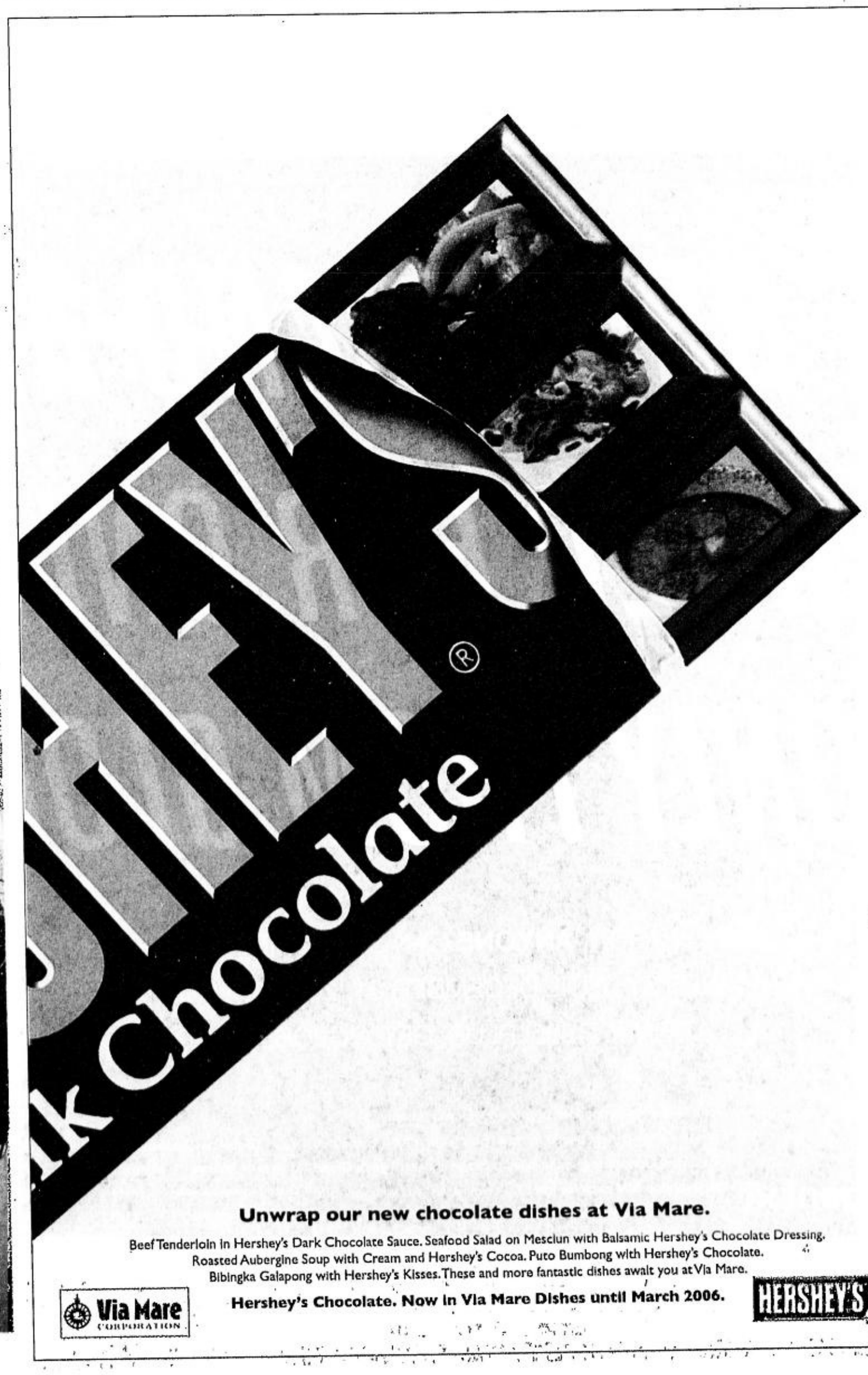

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HERSHEY'S

Mane attraction

I wanted a major hair makeover! The quick fix came in the form of Bergmann hair extensions.

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani
Photos by Chito Vecina

I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED what it was like to have extra-long, silken locks. Whenever I'd see photos of Giselle, Naomi or some other supermodel, I'd feel green with envy because of their silken mane.

And yet, I've never been able to grow my hair past my shoulders. I was either sporting a cropped 'do a la Kate Moss during her waif era, or a generic, boring bob that's surprisingly back in fashion.

The vicious cycle was starting to get boring. I wanted—no, needed—a major mane makeover! So, I didn't think twice when presented with the opportunity to experience luscious locks minus the many years of waiting to grow out an awkward hairstyle and length.

The quick fix I was looking for came in the form of Bergmann hair extensions—the very same extensions supermodels and celebrities would attach to their short or lifeless locks for those Oscar nights or movie makeovers.

Bergmann has been in existence for more than 130 years and is currently the hair market leader in Europe. It has hair studios all over the world, including in Manila, Pampanga and Cebu. Not only does it market hair products and accessories, it also processes human hairs and synthetic fibers.

Through the years Bergmann has developed new techniques in increasing hair volume, providing hair replacements, creating custom-made toupees and ready-to-wear wigs and hair accessories. Hair extensions are just one of the many products it offers. And these were exactly what I needed!

Consultation

The process began with a consultation to determine my hair color and texture, plus the length I wanted to achieve (extra long, if you please!). Then, a Bergmann consultant snipped off a lock of my hair to properly match the hair strands that were to be attached to my limp mane.

After three days, the strands (around 130 bundles of hair, to be more specific) were ready to be attached through the use of rubber hulls and the application of heat. I was a little concerned about possible damage to my already abused hair, but I was instantly reassured that Bergmann hair extensions were quite safe.

It's applied in a way that allows the scalp to breathe and still be easily cared for through constant conditioning and treatments.

It took all of four hours to have the strands attached and styled to blend with my own hair. I was amazed at how Bergmann was able to match the exact color and texture of my hair. I could hardly detect the difference!

I was also pleasantly surprised to discover that the extensions were not at all uncomfortable. They felt like my real hair and were, in fact, healthier than my own locks.

I was also informed that the extensions would last a good three months. They will then be detached and if I so desired, re-attached. What's more, I could do anything I wanted with the extensions—treat, color, curl, cut or blow dry it, the possibilities were endless and so exciting.

The transformation, although quite drastic, was much welcome! In spite of the fact that it now takes an additional 15-30 minutes to get ready in the morning, I'm loving my new look. I definitely feel more feminine and, dare I say, alluring. Super long locks are no doubt worth the extra prep time and maintenance. No need to wonder how those long-maned supermodels feel like. I finally have the womanly tresses I'd always wanted.

For inquiries, call Sheila Godoy at 0917-4306272.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

INSTANT long hair minus the many years of waiting for an awkward hairstyle to grow out

"I'D NEVER been able to grow my hair past my shoulders, so I wanted—no, needed—a major mane makeover."

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-MARIO BAUTISTA
Film Critic/Columnist
People's Journal/
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